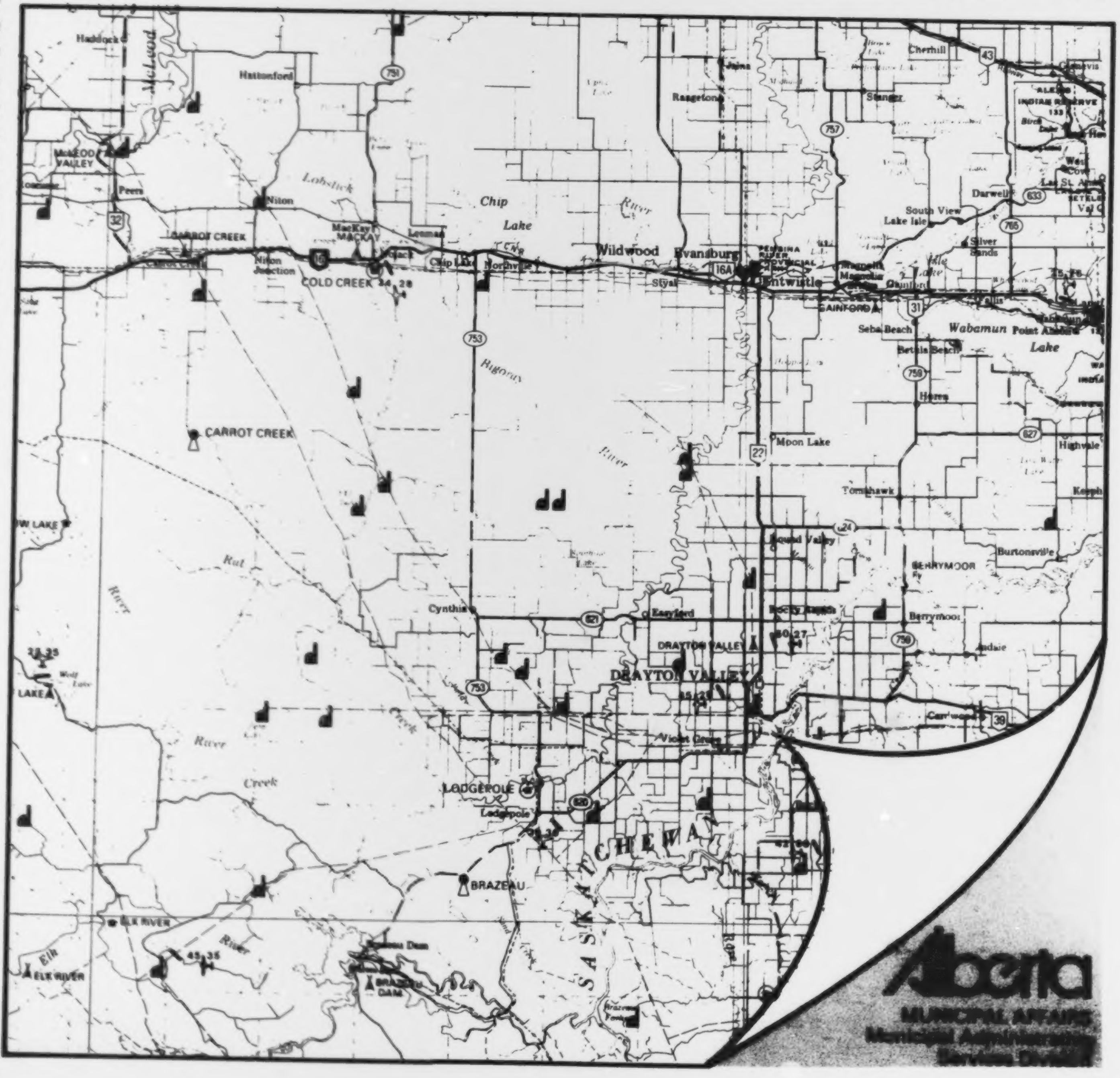
DRAYTON VALLEY AREA MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

MAIN REPORT



Haddock
McLeod
Hattonford
751
McLEOD VALLEY
Peers
Niton
Lobstick
Chip
Lake
32
CARROT CREEK
Niton Junction
MacKay
MACKAY
Leoman
Chip Lake
Northville
16
COLD CREEK
Wildwood
Evansburg
16A
Entwistle
Styal
Ransgeton
757
Cherhill
Stanger
43
Darwell
633
South View
Lake Isle
Silver Sands
765
Magnolia
Gainford
GAINFORD
31
Seba Beach
Wabamun
Point Alison
Lake
Betula Beach
759
Hoven
753
Bigoray
River
CARROT CREEK
Moon Lake
22
627
Highvale
Tomahawk
24
Rocky Valley
Burtonsville
BERRYMOOR
Berrymoor
Rat
River
Cynthia
621
Easyford
Rocky Rapids
DRAYTON VALLEY
759
Violet Grove
LODGEPOLE
Lodgepole
620
SASKATCHEWAN
BRAZEAU
Creek
ELK RIVER
Elk
River
BRAZEAU DAM
39

Alberta
MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS
Municipal Administration
Services Division

86-03447/

DRAYTON VALLEY AREA
MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

MAIN REPORT

Policy and Research Section
Municipal Services Branch
Alberta Municipal Affairs

March 1986

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

1. INTRODUCTION
    1.1. Background 1-1
    1.2. Methodology 1-4

2. AREA OVERVIEW
    2.1. Socio-Economic Profile 2-1
    2.2. Trade Area and Oil patch Servicing 2-4
    2.3. Institutional Districting 2-6

3. THE BASES FOR A NEW MUNICIPALITY
    3.1. The Original Study Areas Arrangement 3-1
    3.2. Comparative Overview 3-2
    3.3. Fiscal Capacities 3-4

4. THE EFFECTS AND IMPACTS ON EXISTING MUNICIPALITIES
    4.1. Introduction 4-1
    4.2. Diminution Generalities 4-1
        4.2.1. Parkland County 4-2
        4.2.2. Improvement District No. 14 4-3
        4.2.3. Leduc County 4-6
        4.2.4. Wetaskiwin County 4-7
        4.2.5. Clearwater M.D. 4-8

    4.3. Fiscal Capacity Shifts 4-9
        4.3.1. Parkland County 4-11
        4.3.2. Leduc County 4-12
        4.3.3. Wetaskiwin County 4-13
        4.3.4. Clearwater M.D. 4-14
        4.3.5. I.D. 14 4-14

    4.4. Current Municipal Finances 4-15
        4.4.1. Gross and Net Expenditures 4-16
        4.4.2. General Administration and Transportation/Public Works 4-20
        4.4.3. Revenue Patterns 4-23
        4.4.4. Balance Sheet Elements 4-27

    4.5. Net Cost Impacts 4-28

5. A DRAYTON VALLEY AREA LOCAL GOVERNMENT
    5.1. Interest Groups 5-1
        5.1.1. Drayton Valley Area Parklanders 5-1
        5.1.2. Town of Drayton Valley 5-3
        5.1.3. Leduc County West-Enders 5-3
        5.1.4. Wetaskiwin County West-Enders 5-4
        5.1.5. Friends of Rose Creek: Clearwater M.D. 5-7
        5.1.6. I.D. 14 Interests 5-7

TABLE OF CONTENTS (continued)

Page

5.2. Forms of Government 5-10
5.3. Town of Drayton Valley 5-12
5.4. The Contours of a Drayton Valley Area Local Government 5-15
  5.4.1. Base Data 5-15
  5.4.2. Optional Configurations 5-15
  5.4.3. Fiscal Capacities, Assessment Mix and Densities 5-17

5.5. Net Municipal Tax Cost Projections 5-18
5.6. Summary and Conclusions 5-25

6. SCHOOL SYSTEM IMPACTS AND OPTIONS

6.1. Introduction 6-1
  6.1.1. The Presentation in Perspective 6-1
  6.1.2. Impact Areas and New System Options 6-3

6.2. Parkland County School System 6-7
  6.2.1. General Discussion: Existing Arrangements 6-7
  6.2.2. Diminution Generalities and Financial Impact 6-8

6.3. Yellowhead School System 6-10
6.4. Leduc County School System 6-12
  6.4.1. General Discussion: Existing Arrangements 6-12
  6.4.2. Diminution Generalities and Financial Impact 6-15

6.5. Wetaskiwin County School System 6-18
  6.5.1. General Discussion and Existing Arrangements 6-18
  6.5.2. Diminution Generalities and Financial Impact 6-20

6.6. Rocky Mountain School Division 6-21
6.7. A Drayton Valley Area School System 6-21
  6.7.1. Options and Base Data 6-21
  6.7.2. Projected Financial Implications 6-22
  6.7.3. Summary Observations 6-25

7. CONCLUDING OVERVIEW

7.1. Historical Perspectives 7-1
7.2. The Impacted Jurisdictions 7-5
  7.2.1. Parkland County 7-5
  7.2.2. Leduc County 7-12
  7.2.3. Improvement District No. 14 7-19
  7.2.4. Wetaskiwin County 7-22
  7.2.5. Clearwater M.D. 7-24

TABLE OF CONTENTS (continued)

Page

7.2.6. Urban Municipalities 7-26
  7.2.6.1. Town of Drayton Valley 7-26
  7.2.6.2. Village of Breton 7-27
  7.2.6.3. Villages of Wildwood, Evansburg and Entwistle 7-29

7.3. A Drayton Valley Area Local Government 7-31
  7.3.1. Introduction 7-31
  7.3.2. Extent of Government 7-32
  7.3.3. Form of Government 7-33
  7.3.4. Municipal Services 7-34
  7.3.5. Education Services 7-37
  7.3.6. Consequentials 7-38

7.4. Future Action Considerations 7-39

MAPS

MAPS:

PAGE

1-1 Core Study Area and Secondary Study Areas 1-7
1-2 Drayton Valley Provincial Electoral Division 1-8

2-1 Drayton Valley Trading Area 2-12
2-2 Oil/Gas Fields (E.R.C.B.) and Gas Plants 2-13
2-3 School System Boundaries 2-14
2-4 (Senior High) School Attendance Areas 2-15
2-5 Hospital Districts 2-16
2-6 D.V. Landfill Authority, and Health Unit Systems 2-17
2-7 Alberta Agriculture: District Agriculturist Districts 2-18
2-8 Operating Exchanges (and Toll-free Calling Relationships) 2-19
2-9 Town of Drayton Valley: Fire and Rescue Response Areas 2-20

4-1 Adjusted Study Areas 4-34

5-1 Configuration Options A-B 5-28
5-2 Configuration Options C-D 5-29
5-3 Configuration Options E-F 5-30
5-4 Configuration Options G-H 5-31

7-1 Local Electoral Divisions: Existing or Proposed 7-42

TABLES

TABLE PAGE

3-1 Base Data (Original Study Areas) 3-5

3-2 Study Area Percentages: 1984 Data 3-6

3-3 Base Data - Comparative Statistics 3-7

3-4 Assessment Mix Data 3-8

3-5 Assessment Mix Percentages 3-9

4-1 Diminution Generalities (Refined Estimates) 4-35

4-2 Comparative Diminution Effects (in absolute terms) 4-36

4-3 Comparative Fiscal Capacity Shifts 4-37

4-4 Fiscal Capacity Trends: 1981-1984 4-38

4-5 Recent Changes in Equalized Assessment 4-39

4-6 Expenditure Effort (Gross and Net Operating Expenditures per $1000 equalized assessment) 4-40

4-7 Municipal Functions: Gross/Net Operating Expenditures 4-41

4-8 Road Inventory Breakdown by Surface Type (March 1984) 4-45

4-9 Transportation/Public Works: Operating Finances Per Km. 4-46

4-10 All Functions Cost-Recovery Rates 4-47

4-11 Operating Revenues (1981-84 Average Data) 4-48

4-12 General Revenue Detail 4-49

4-13 Equalized Mill Rates (1981-84 Average Data) 4-50

4-14 Balance Sheet Elements 4-51

4-15 Comparative Expenditure Level and Net Cost Reductions 4-52

4-16 Comparative Equalized Mill Rates and Expenditure Effort (1984) 4-53

4-17 Comparative Taxes (1985): Representative Properties 4-54

TABLE PAGE

5-1 A Drayton Valley Area Local Government: Revised Base Data, 1984 5-32

5-2 Drayton Valley Area Local Government Configuration Options: Revised Base Data 1984 5-33

5-3 Fiscal Capacity, Assessment Mix, and Density Statistics (1984 Data) 5-34

5-4 Assumed Function Finances: Options A, C, E and G 5-35

5-5 Comparative Equalized Mill Rates (General Municipal Taxation) 5-36

5-6 Comparative Expenditure Efforts 5-37

6-1 School Systems: Selected Comparative Data 1984 6-27

6-2 Schools Within, or Serving Parts of, the Study Areas 6-28

6-3 Parkland County School System: Comparison Factors 6-33

6-4 Parkland County School System: Impact Assessment Summary Statistics (1984) 6-34

6-5 Yellowhead School Division: Comparison Factors (1984) 6-35

6-6 Yellowhead School System: Impact Assessment Summary Statistics (1984) 6-36

6-7 Leduc County School System: Comparison Factors (1984) 6-37

6-8 Leduc County School System: Impact Assessment Summary Statistics (1984) 6-38

6-9 Wetaskiwin County School System: Comparison Factors; and Impact Assessment Summary Statistics (1984) 6-39

6-10 Drayton Valley Area School System: Base Data 6-40

6-11 Drayton Valley Area School System Combinations: Mill Rate Comparisons 6-41

6-12 Drayton Valley Area School System Configurations: Comparative Statistics 6-42

7-1 Parkland County: Local Electoral Divisions by Population 7-43

APPENDIX CONTENTS

1. Improvement District No. 14/Yellowhead School Division No. 12:

- 1.1. I.D. No. 14 Advisory Council
  - 1.1.1. Letter to Minister (January 17, 1986)
  - 1.1.2. General Comments
  - 1.1.3. Detailed Comments ("Appendix A")

- 1.2. Yellowhead School Division
  - 1.2.1. Board of Trustees
  - 1.2.2. Town of Hinton
  - 1.2.3. Town of Edson
  - 1.2.4. Village of Wildwood
  - 1.2.5. Village of Evansburg

2. County of Leduc:

- 2.1. Leduc County Council
  - 2.1.1. Letter to Minister (January 27, 1986)
  - 2.1.2. Supporting Documentation News Release

- 2.2. Leduc County Board of Education
  - 2.2.1. Preliminary Comments (January 15, 1986)
  - 2.2.2. Public Message (February, 1986)

- 2.3. Village of Breton
  - 2.3.1. Letter to Minister (February 11, 1986)
  - 2.3.2. Main Response
  - 2.3.3. Statement to Yes Group Meeting (February 24, 1986)

3. County of Parkland:

- 3.1. Parkland County Board of Education
  - 3.1.1. Letter to the Department (January 16, 1986)
  - 3.1.2. Letter to the Provincial Government (January 16, 1986)

- 3.2. Town of Drayton Valley

- 3.3. Village of Entwistle

4. County of Wetaskiwin:

- 4.1. Wetaskiwin County Council

5. Other Public Agencies:

- 5.1. Alberta Hospitals and Medical Care
- 5.2. Regional Planning Commissions
  - 5.2.1. Edmonton Metropolitan R.P.C.
  - 5.2.2. Yellowhead R.P.C.
- 5.3. Alberta West Central Health Unit

6. Interest Groups:

- 6.1. Yes Group of Western Ratepayers
  - 6.1.1. Letter to Minister (February 6, 1986)
  - 6.1.2. Breton District Yes Group
- 6.2. Breton and District Chamber of Commerce

I. INTRODUCTION:

I.I. Background:

This presentation constitutes the final main report on the Drayton Valley Area Municipal Feasibility Study. The study has been undertaken essentially as an information service to area residents. It indirectly addresses what appears to be a long-standing contentious issue in the general Drayton Valley area, namely, that the area would be better served with a local government of its own, rather than being on the western end of counties headquartered far to the east. Interest in the issue was re-kindled when a province-wide local electoral divisional boundaries updating exercise, initiated by the Department of Municipal Affairs, resulted, in the case of Parkland County, in the addition of two councillors, and in an urban/rural divisional structuring. Drayton Valley area residents feared that their interests would be less well-served by these changes, and that their western part of the county - so different in character and needs from the almost semi-urban east - would become even more marginal in political terms in the overall county scheme of things.

These western concerns were communicated to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, through the area's M.L.A., with a request for a study of the feasibility of establishing a separate county centred in the Drayton Valley area. Some residents from across the North Saskatchewan River, residing mainly in the western part of Leduc County, also communicated a desire to have their, generally similar, concerns covered in the study. This common interest recalls an earlier campaign, in the early 1970's, when residents from the western ends of three counties (Parkland, Leduc and Wetaskiwin) petitioned for a separate county centred around Drayton Valley.

A provincial government committee (under the chairmanship of J.C. Leslie) was appointed in 1973 to investigate the matter. After holding public meetings it made an interim recommendation favourable to the creation of a new county, but subsequent actions by the existing municipalities, to improve servicing and to deal with a particular schooling issue, quickly reduced the apparent need for a change at that time. In its final report (March 1976) the Leslie Committee recommended against consideration of the formation of a new county. In fact, the committee recommended in favour of a further westward expansion of Parkland County to incorporate the Chip Lake-Wildwood-Evansburg area of I.D. 14, and a similar westward extension of Wetaskiwin County to incorporate what is now the Rose Creek area of Clearwater M.D.

In 1977 the Department of Municipal Affairs conducted a financial impact assessment study of the possible ramifications if a new county was established. Mainly because of the extensive boundaries observed in the exercise, that study indicated major tax rate reductions for the new county residents, but at the expense of unacceptably high rate increases for the balance of Parkland County. Leduc County, I.D. 14, and the urban municipalities supporting the Yellowhead School Division, were also assessed as being likely to experience adverse financial impacts. These adverse effects, in combination with the increased administrative overheads envisaged for the new county, weighed against active pursuit of the proposal by the department at that time.

The intention to conduct the present information study was announced by the Minister of Municipal Affairs in October 1984. The study was begun in earnest in early 1985, when most of the data were collected and field interviews were undertaken. A preliminary discussion report was presented to a meeting of the councils of the affected municipalities at the A.A.M.D.&C. convention in Red Deer in April 1985. As a result of this meeting it became clear that greater attention needed be given to school system matters, and this was addressed in a draft chapter prepared during the summer of 1985 and circulated to affected councils and school boards.

Following receipt of the above comments a draft Preliminary Main Report was prepared and was given a limited circulation mainly to those local authorities most liable to be most directly affected by any change. Other interested parties who had contributed information to the study also received this draft, in December 1985, with a request for comments and information that could be usefully included in the present final report. As a result of this circulation and request several submissions were received which are reported in the Appendix. In some cases these submissions have prompted changes to the preliminary draft, mainly in the form of clarifications or additional information and interpretation.

1.2. Methodology:

The present study has been styled as a rough, first-cut, financial feasibility and impact assessment. The main goal has been to generate information on these matters, in relation to a range of options, which might form the basis for a decision as to whether creation of a new local government in the general Drayton Valley area should be actively pursued at this time. If such a decision is made in the affirmative a more definitive, implementation-oriented, study, or set of studies, would need to be set in train.

This study has focussed on municipal feasibility, though school system matters have been addressed to some extent (see Section 6). If an option involving a county structure (rather than simply an M.D.) is favoured, a detailed school system feasibility and impact assessment study, led by Alberta Education, would be appropriate. (The issues to be dealt with in such a study are discussed on pp. 6-2 and 6-3.) The study approach has also featured an emphasis on municipal financial feasibility, and has not attempted to assess the political feasibility, desirability, or justifiability of the various options. No public opinion polling has been attempted; indeed, data collection and interviews have been restricted to municipal officials and councillors, and to provincial government representatives. Ideally, a systematic canvassing of, hopefully better informed, public opinion on the issue, should follow public release of the present study report, to help determine if any change is warranted.

It was not possible because of time and resource constraints to undertake either a detailed market areas survey, or a carefully considered delineation of the area predominantly serviced from Drayton Valley; instead, a crude study areas arrangement was established, somewhat expediently, to facilitate base data collection. The arrangement adopted at the outset is indicated in Map 1-1. The Core Study Area (C.S.A.) was defined as all of that part of the (recently revised) provincial electoral division of Drayton Valley lying to the north and west of the North Saskatchewan River (Map 1-2). Secondary Study Areas (S.S.A.'s) were first established across the river by a squaring-off process, encompassing parts of Leduc and Wetaskiwin Counties and Clearwater M.D. The fourth secondary study area, around Chip Lake in I.D. 14, was established later, when the core study area portion of the I.D. was discovered to include considerable assessment but minimal population responsibilities (in contrast to the Chip Lake area).

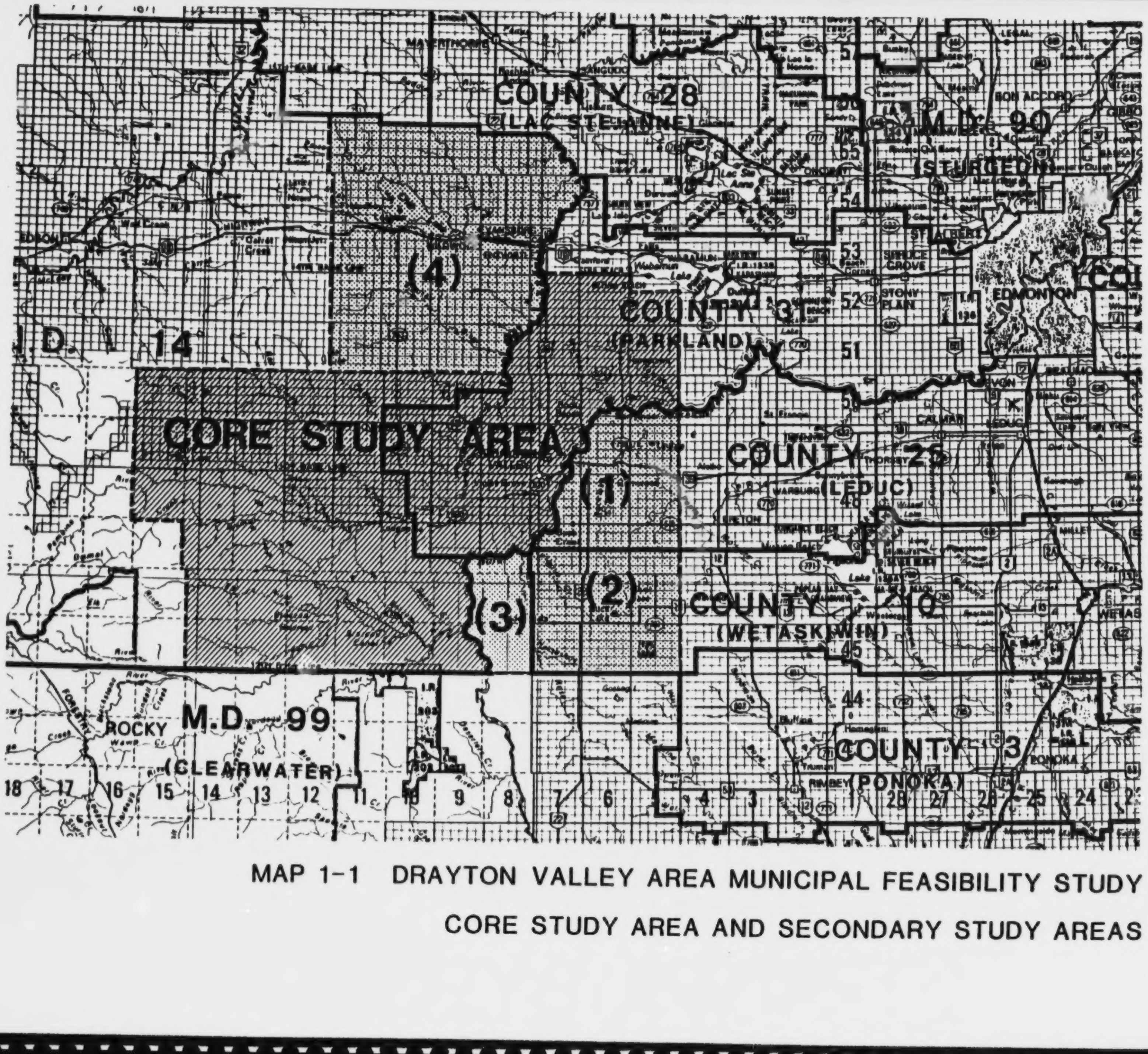
Subsequent detailed study, especially in relation to school attendance area patterns and school division alignments, revealed the inappropriateness of the initial study areas arrangement in a number of cases. As the study progressed it became more meaningful and relevant to regard school attendance areas, especially those relating to senior high schools, as key reference points. These are detailed in Map 2-4, with school system boundaries indicated in Map 2-3, and are discussed in greater detail in the next section.

The initial study areas arrangement was most crucial for the collection of assessment data, especially for pipe- and power-lines, which, once equalized, became the critical factor in the calculation of fiscal capacity statistics. These facilitated the financial feasibility analyses. The initial boundaries were also critical as the reference point for estimation of net costs by function attributable to those parts of existing municipalities which might be incorporated into the new municipality. These estimates, in conjunction with assessment changes, became the main factors in the impact assessment component of the study. Both aspects were also considered in terms of the general municipal finances of the study area municipalities, in comparison with a sample of 10 rural municipalities[1] selected for their location in roughly similar circumstances to a Drayton Valley area municipality, i.e. straddling the boundaries of, or just outside the influence of, a metropolitan region.

Wherever possible financial background data have been developed for the period 1981 to 1984, but calculations in support of the main analyses have focussed on the 1984 situation. The impact or feasibility has therefore been assessed as if a new municipality had been established, and was operating, in 1984.

---

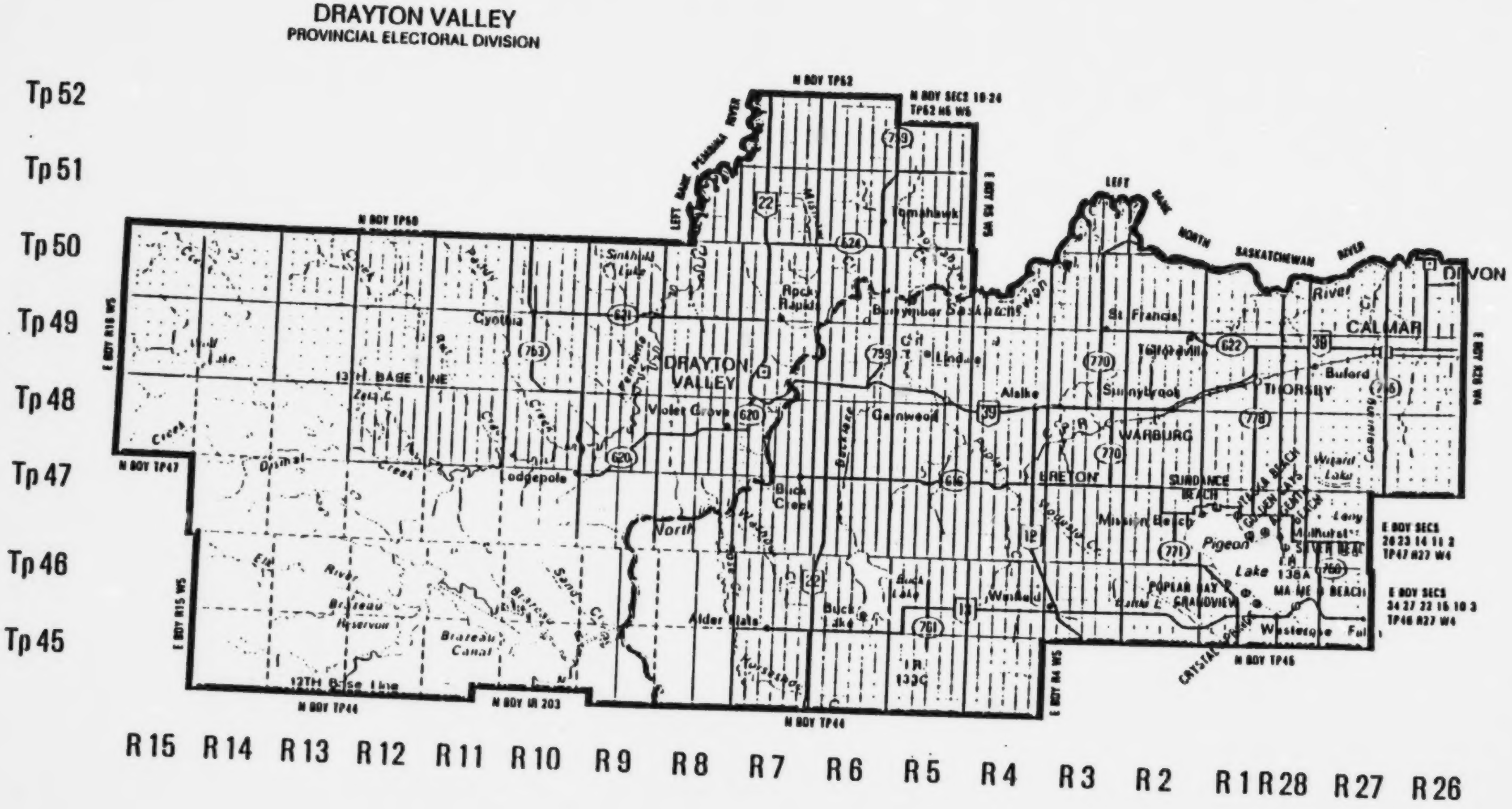
[1] 5 Municipal Districts: Pincher Creek (#9); Taber (#14); Willow Creek (#26); Starland (#47); Westlock (#92).
5 Counties: Vulcan (#2); Athabasca (#12); Smoky Lake (#13); Minburn (#27); Flagstaff (#29).


COUNTY 28
(LAC STE. ANNE)
M.D. 90
(STURGEON)
EDMONTON
COUNTY 31
(PARKLAND)
COUNTY 25
(LEDUC)
COUNTY 10
(WETASKIWIN)
COUNTY 3
(PONOKA)
M.D. 14
CORE STUDY AREA
(1)
(2)
(3)
(4)
M.D. 99
(CLEARWATER)
ROCKY
SPRUCE GROVE
STONY PLAIN
CALMAR
LEDUC
RIMBEY
PONOKA
18
17
16
15
14
13
12
11
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
1
28
27
26
25
24
44
45
46
51
52
53
54
55

MAP 1-1 DRAYTON VALLEY AREA MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

CORE STUDY AREA AND SECONDARY STUDY AREAS

MAP 1-2: DRAYTON VALLEY PROVINCIAL ELECTORAL DIVISION (1985)


DRAYTON VALLEY
PROVINCIAL ELECTORAL DIVISION
Tp 52
Tp 51
Tp 50
Tp 49
Tp 48
Tp 47
Tp 46
Tp 45
R15
R14
R13
R12
R11
R10
R9
R8
R7
R6
R5
R4
R3
R2
R1
R28
R27
R26
DRAYTON VALLEY
CALMAR
DEVON
THORSBY
WARBURG
BRETON
Tomahawk
Rock Rapids
Cynthia
Lodgepole
Violet Grove
Alder Flats
Buck Creek
Buck Lake
Winfield
Genwood
Alsike
Sunnybrook
St Francis
Telfordville
Buford
Mission Beach
SUNDANCE BEACH
Pigeon Lake
POPLAR BAY
GRANDVIEW
Westerose
North Saskatchewan River
LEFT BANK NORTH SASKATCHEWAN RIVER
LEFT BANK PEMBINA RIVER
Brazeau Reservoir
Brazeau Canal
13TH BASE LINE
12TH Base Line
N BDY TP52
N BDY TP50
N BDY TP47
N BDY TP44
N BDY TP45
N BDY IR 203
E BDY R16 W5
E BDY R15 W5
E BDY R5 W5
E BDY R4 W5
E BDY R28 W4
N BDY SECS 19-24 TP52 R6 W5
E BDY SECS 20 23 14 11 2 TP47 R27 W4
E BDY SECS 34 27 22 15 10 3 TP46 R27 W4
22
39
616
620
621
622
626
759
763
770
771
778
12
13
761

2. AREA OVERVIEW:

2.1. Socio-Economic Profile:

The Drayton Valley area is located just outside the Edmonton metropolitan region, at a distance too great for comfortable commuting on a daily basis. In this respect it differs markedly from the almost semi-urban character of the areas around Spruce Grove-Stony Plain and Leduc-Nisku, where acreage-owners, with strong economic ties to Edmonton, predominate. The contrast is underlined by the fact that the area borders on the Green Zone, and lies on the eastern edge of the Eastern Slopes.

As such the Drayton Valley area is a still-developing, rather than a fully developed, agricultural area. Mostly part-time farmers look to the oilpatch and the forestry reserve, rather than to Edmonton, for opportunities to supplement their income. The Town of Drayton Valley has also been particularly dependent on the oilpatch for its economic well-being, and is currently anxious to diversify into forest-based industries, all the time trying to strengthen its role as a district service centre for the immediate area outside Edmonton's main sphere of influence.

The area does not have a long history of full-fledged incorporated local government. Drayton Valley was one of Alberta's 'new towns,' developed mostly in the 1950's, and the surrounding rural area was constituted as an unincorporated improvement district until the fairly recent formation of Parkland County. While townspeople managed to obtain full local autonomy fairly quickly the rural area's experience of local government was not so satisfactory. Local government was available, but not very locally and somewhat fragmentally in several county seats located in the much more densely populated and Edmonton-oriented eastern areas. The town of Drayton Valley has also experienced difficulties on account of municipal service users from a trading area which encompasses several rural municipalities, headquartered at a great distance in centres quite different from Drayton Valley in make-up and outlook. Similarly based inconveniences attend the oilpatch industries operating out of Drayton Valley as they develop resources which have no respect for municipal boundaries.

There is a considerable interdependence between the Town of Drayton Valley and the surrounding rural areas, mainly as a result of the integrating effect of the oilpatch, but also in relation to agricultural activities, and, it may be anticipated in the future, in relation to forest-industry developments. For example, 1981 census data indicate that almost half of the 4100 jobs located in the town were filled by out-of-town residents, most of whom (60%) lived in Parkland, or in Leduc County (20%). It is also believed that a substantial proportion of the almost 2000 workers enumerated as living and working in Drayton Valley actually spent most of their working days outside the town working on oil/gas field installations or pipelines.[2]

---

[2] The census probably sought the address of the employer. Many oil companies are based in Drayton Valley, which serves as a centre for their operations, which in turn are located almost exclusively in rural areas.

The agricultural community uses Drayton Valley as a centre for support activities. These include: a machinery dealership, feed supplier, three general farm goods suppliers, three county abattoirs, a major fertilizer outlet, veterinarian service, a farm fuel distributor and an auction mart. It is perhaps notable that the agricultural development of the district followed, rather than preceded, the oil/gas-related developments. The latter have therefore helped to spur and sustain farming operations by spawning the support services listed above, and through integration of farm-work and oilpatch work (e.g. maintenance of batteries). Consequently, there appears to be much less of the polarity of interests, between urban residents and rural residents, that tends to be the case in more traditional and well-established farming areas. For example, the local agricultural society membership has a majority of town residents.

As regards future economic prospects, and beginning with agriculture, there appears to be scope for almost doubling the farmed acreage. It is a good forage area with potential for the production of coarse grains. At present active consideration is being given to expanding the landbase south-west of Lodgepole, as well as increasing grazing reserve capacities in the district.

The Drayton Valley area has good prospects in relation to the development of the forestry resource within the O'Chiese Block to the south and west of the town. A new strandboard mill is due to begin operations in 1986, while Makin's plans for a major integrated forest products complex, based on this Block, are presently stalled. If these were ever to materialise the types of development to be experienced may involve an integrated pulp and paper plant, and perhaps a market fluff/tissue grade pulp mill, the main objective being the better utilization of the presently underutilized mixed-wood (aspen/spruce) species.

Since 1953, when the massive Pembina oil field was discovered oil and gas production has constituted the major economic development activity in the area. With the more recent discovery of other large fields to the west of Drayton Valley, such as West Pembina, of deeper productive formations, such as the Nisku Formation, and of new shallow formations, such as the Belly River Formation, development prospects for oil/gas appear to be good for another 20 to 30 years or so. Considerable secondary and tertiary recovery efforts are also anticipated. The general area is well-developed with the necessary production plants and pipelines, encouraging exploratory deep drilling in nearby unexplored areas (in contrast for instance to the area west of Edson where some oil/gas has been found but production facilities are little developed).

2.2. Trade Area and Oilpatch Servicing:

The current extent of the influence of Drayton Valley as a trading centre is difficult to determine. The available market areas survey information dates back to around 1970, and the most recent general plan for the town (1978) simply reproduced a sphere of influence map included in an earlier 1967 plan. (See Map 2-1.) The area over which Drayton Valley has a dominant influence, in relation to competing centres, is probably much less than that indicated, and it would be this lesser area which would best be regarded as the logical core of a new municipality, at least as far as the more settled agricultural areas are concerned.

Information presented in a 1971 Market Areas Study prepared by the Edmonton Regional Planning Commission confirms the impression that, then at least, Drayton Valley's influence fell away quite sharply with distance from the town. Drayton Valley dominated only so far as: midway between Tomahawk and Stony Plain; and midway to Breton. A similar study at about the same time, conducted by the Battle River Regional Planning Commission, revealed that Drayton Valley exerted a dominant influence into the west end of Wetaskiwin County, for some, but by no means a majority, of goods and services categories. It is doubtful if this general area of dominant influence has changed much over the past 15 years or so, although it is conceivable that the paving and re-alignment of Highway 22 south to the Alder Flats-Buck Lake area has served to strengthen Drayton Valley's influence in this part of Wetaskiwin County.

On the basis of the somewhat dated information discussed above it is suggested that the settled area over which Drayton Valley dominates involves a boundary line passing: between Moon Lake and Round Valley on the north; between Tomahawk and Low Water Lake on the north-east; between Berrymoor and Lindale on the south-east; and between Buck Creek and Alder Flats/Buck Lake on the south. This 'inner arc' is outlined in Map 2-1. It is almost certainly the case that Drayton Valley's influence extends beyond this line, but its influence ceases to dominate and increasingly overlaps with the areas of influence of centres such as Evansburg, Stony Plain and Breton.

In terms of the westerly extent of Drayton Valley's area of influence the most relevant basis for delineation would appear to relate to the servicing of oil fields, pipelines and gas plants, as between Edson, Drayton Valley and Rocky Mountain House. The latter appears to be dominant south of the 12th Baseline (see Map 2-2, which includes lines connecting gas plants with their main operating base community). The division between Edson and Drayton Valley appears to fall within a fairly broad belt traversing the Columbia, Peco, West-Pem and Carrot Creek fields. The southern part of the Bigoray field also appears to be serviced out of Drayton Valley. As will be noted later such a boundary for a new municipality would entail a comparatively large loss in assessment for I.D. 14, with little or no reduction in expenditures because of the virtual absence of such expenditures (the area is largely unsettled).

2.3. Institutional Districting:

The boundaries of a selection of other agencies serving the Drayton Valley were also surveyed to establish where the area was accorded a distinct identity, and the extent of the areas so defined. It was thought that such an exercise might help define proven and workable areas that might constitute the basis for a new Drayton Valley area municipality or local government.

School systems serving the area do not indicate any particular singling out the Drayton Valley district (see Map 2-3). Generally it is the county boundaries which define the school systems. Of particular note however is the 'island' around the Brazeau Reservoir which, though not contiguous with Parkland, is specifically assigned to the Parkland County school authority. In addition, the area surrounding this island is 'unorganized' for school purposes. It includes part of the Brazeau River field, which appears to be predominantly serviced from Drayton Valley, thus establishing something of a case for its possible inclusion in any new Drayton Valley-centred municipality.

Within each school system particular attention was paid to the hierarchy of school attendance areas and especially those relating to senior high schools (Map 2-4). The eastern boundaries of the Drayton Valley senior high school attendance area conforms closely to the trading area over which the town appeared to exert a dominant influence. Adjacent senior high school attendance areas were dominated by areas where Drayton Valley appeared to have a distinctly sub-dominant influence in comparison with other school centres (Evansburg, Seba Beach, Stony Plain, Breton, Winfield and Alder Flats).

Drayton Valley is the centre of its own hospital district, separate from adjacent hospital districts based in Stony Plain, Edson and Breton (Map 2-5). The Drayton Valley H.D. includes the Seba Beach and Magnolia areas of Parkland County as well as much of the Chip Lake area of I.D. 14. Its western boundary results in the inclusion of many of the gas plants and oil fields that appear to be serviced from Drayton Valley (rather than Edson).

The Hospital District's Executive Director reported that, although the boundary does not cross the North Saskatchewan River, the district, especially with its new health complex, often provides services to residents of the Breton Hospital District. This was certainly the case when the Breton hospital was short of doctors (the Drayton Valley Health Complex has 9 doctors and 3 dentists). The complex has therefore attracted both Leduc County and Wetaskiwin County residents on occasion. It was also indicated however that residents of the Magnolia/Seba Beach areas tend to use the Stony Plain hospital, even though they are located within the Drayton Valley Hospital District. In addition, the I.D. 14 submission reports that many people from the Wildwood-Evansburg area use the new Mayerthorpe Hospital or Edmonton hospitals (Appendices 1.1.2. and 1.1.3.).

The provincially-operated health unit serving Drayton Valley is the West-Central unit, centred in Edson but with a district office in the town (Map 2-6). The health unit boundary splits Parkland County in such a manner that Tomahawk lies within the Stony Plain-Lac Ste. Anne unit, while Moon Lake is serviced out of the Drayton Valley office. The West-Central unit also maintains an office in Evansburg. Separate health units service the areas across the North Saskatchewan River.

The official Alberta Agriculture District served from Drayton Valley includes a large part of Parkland County from about Range 4 west, and south from Lake Wabamun (Map 2-7), although the northern part appears to be serviced more from the Evansburg and Stony Plain offices. The official area also includes all of Leduc County west of

Alsike and Breton. In addition however the District Agriculturist observed that his office is also serving the north-western part of the Rimbey District (in Wetaskiwin County). This more extensive area was graphically defined in the course of a 1982 cattle subsidy program, which helped to identify those area farmers preferring to do business in Drayton Valley over other District centres.

An examination of telephone operating exchange areas, and toll-free calling relationships also established the strong influence of Drayton Valley over a comparatively extensive area (Map 2-8). The Drayton Valley exchange has toll-free calling relationships with no less than five other exchanges (Lodgepole, Evansburg, Tomahawk, Breton and Alder Flats). The area encompassed includes, interestingly, much of the Grand Trunk (Evansburg), Breton and Alder Flats senior high school attendance areas (but hardly any part of the Seba Beach school catchment). No other centre in the general area has toll-free relationships with more than one other exchange.

Inter-municipal servicing agreements around Drayton Valley focus on fire protection/emergency rescue services and the new sanitary landfill. The town is also keen to have similar agreements in relation to the operation of the library, recreation facilities (swimming pool especially), and the cemetery. Some years ago the town unsuccessfully pursued an industrial tax transfer arrangement with I.D. 14 to compensate the town for housing workers servicing the oil/gas developments in the I.D. (Parkland County would also probably welcome a similar tax transfer arrangement as compensation for the additional road maintenance and re-construction expenses related to heavy oilpatch and forestry reserve traffic passing through this part of the County into I.D. 14.)

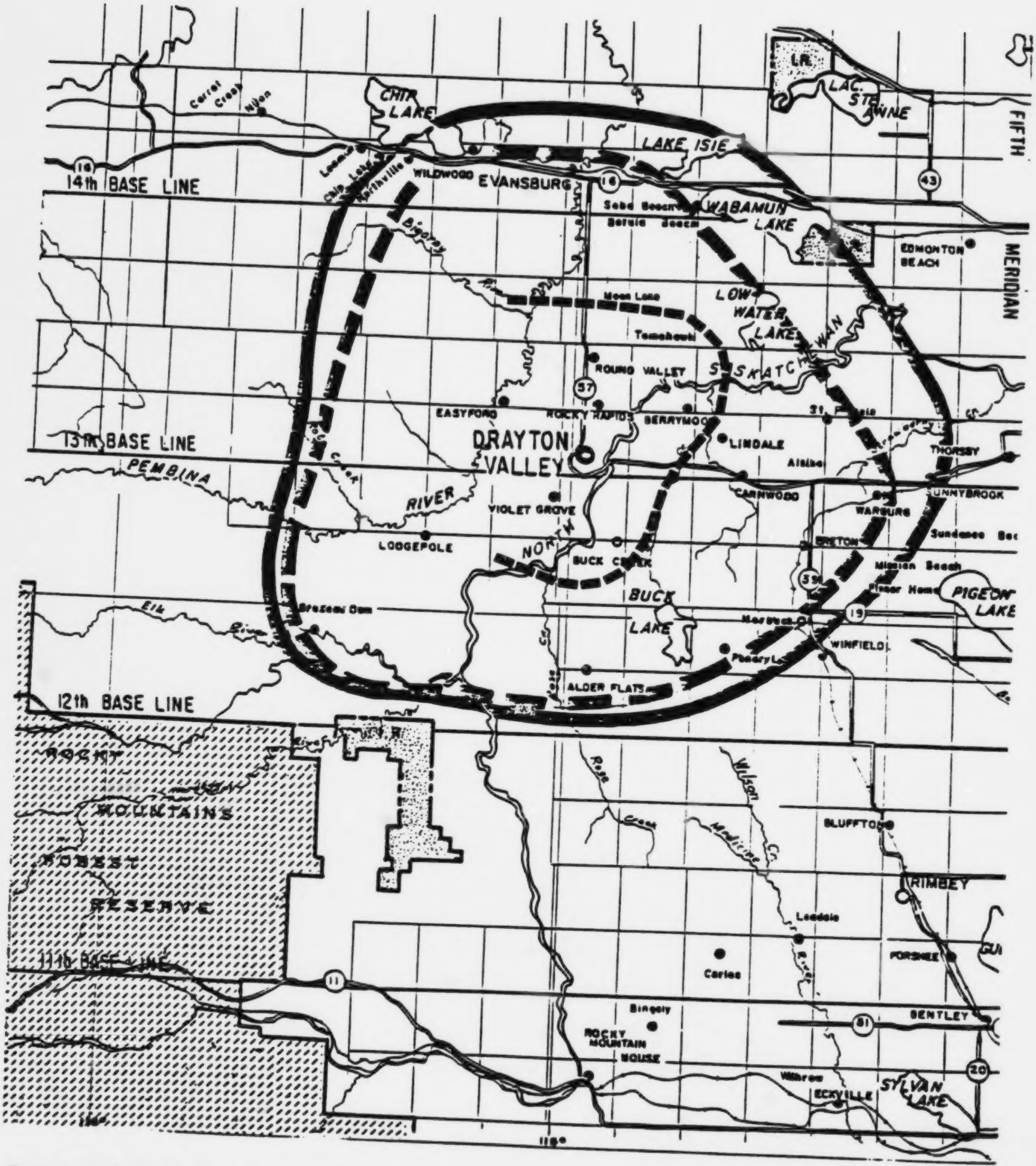
The most extensive inter-municipal arrangement at present relates to fire response and emergency rescue activities by the town's force (Map 2-9). The outermost boundary relates to the 'primary rescue response area' which stretches over a wide, roughly triangular area defined by Breton, Evansburg and the Brazeau Reservoir.

The 'secondary fire response area' also extends into Leduc County as far as Range 6 (i.e. including the Lindale and Carnwood areas, but not Breton). Within Parkland this particular area includes Moon Lake and the general area west of Tomahawk, as well as a block in the Lodgepole area. Within I.D. 14 the 'secondary fire response area' extends as far west as parts of the Brazeau River and West Pembina fields, but there is no formal agreement between the town and the I.D. The 'primary fire and rescue response area' includes: the Town of Drayton Valley; the Rocky Rapids, Ramona, Easyford, Cynthia, Dunnington and Violet Grove areas of Parkland County; and the Berrymoor and Buck Creek areas of Leduc County.

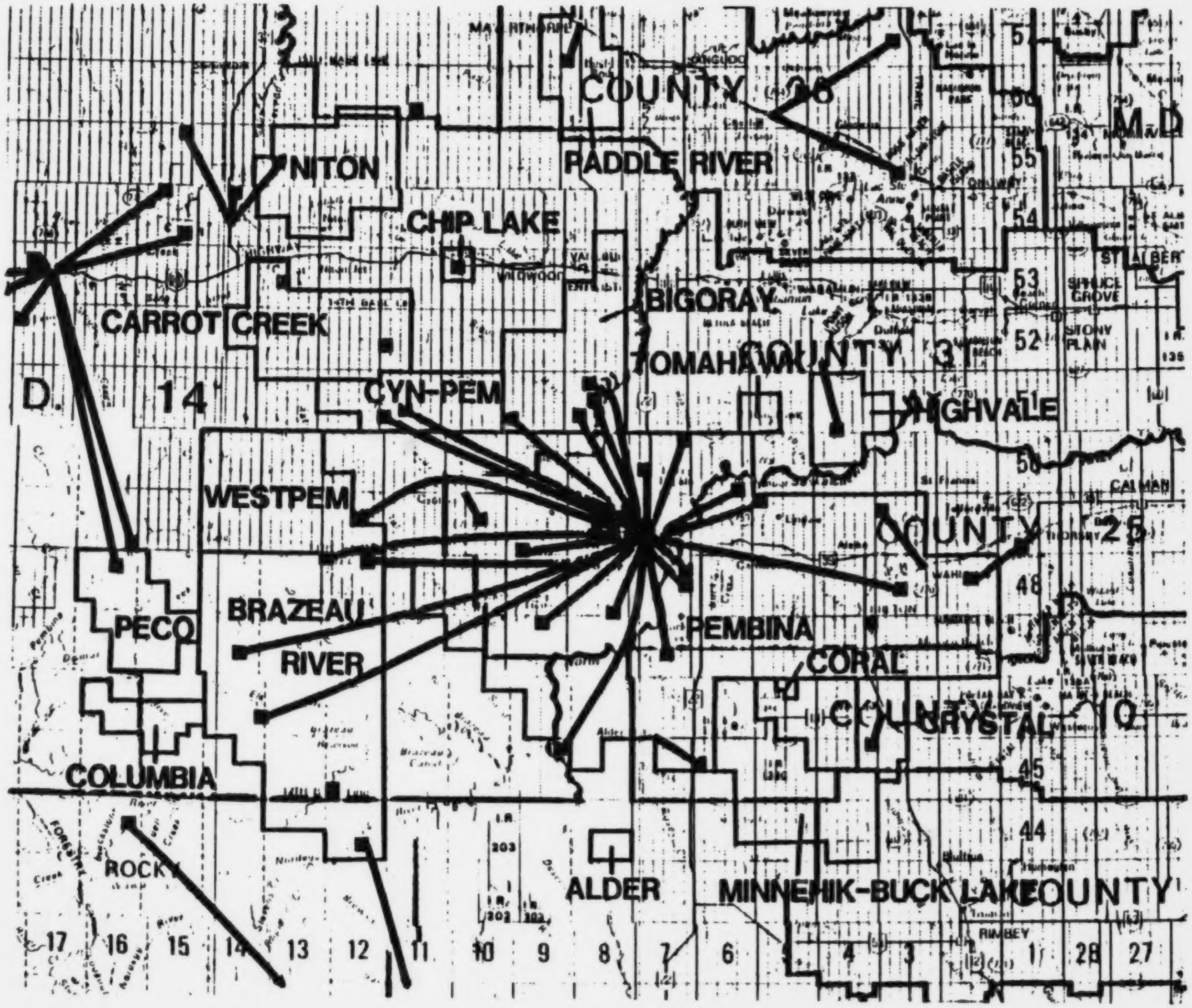
The service area for the recently established Drayton Valley Landfill Authority covers the town and parts of Parkland and Leduc Counties. In addition to the main sanitary landfill just outside the town the Authority maintains transfer stations at: Cynthia; Lodgepole; between Rocky Rapids and Tomahawk; south of Berrymoor; and near Buck Creek. The eastern boundary is roughly defined by a circle, centred in Drayton Valley, passing through Tomahawk and Carnwood. Wetaskiwin County is not a member of the Authority, although it is conceivable that some residents north of Alder Flats and Buck Lake will occasionally use the Buck Creek transfer station. (The authority's service area is outlined in Map 2-6.)

Finally, it may be noted the Parkland County maintains a substantial sub-office in the Town of Drayton Valley to facilitate improved servicing of the west end of the county.

MAP 2-1
DRAYTON VALLEY TRADING AREA
(Primary Trading Area: Broken Line
Secondary Service Area: Solid Line
Inner Arc of Dominant Influence)


CHIP LAKE
LAC STE ANNE
I.R.
FIFTH MERIDIAN
LAKE ISLE
14th BASE LINE
WILDWOOD
EVANSBURG
Carrot Creek
Niton
Chip Lake
Northville
16
43
Seba Beach
Betula Beach
WABAMUN LAKE
EDMONTON BEACH
Bigoray
Moon Lake
LOW WATER LAKE
Tomahawk
SASKATCHEWAN
ROUND VALLEY
57
EASYFORD
ROCKY RAPIDS
BERRYMOOR
LINDALE
Alsike
THORSBY
13th BASE LINE
PEMBINA
RIVER
DRAYTON VALLEY
CARNWOOD
WARBURG
SUNNYBROOK
VIOLET GROVE
NORTH
LODGEPOLE
BUCK CREEK
BRETON
Sundance Beach
39
Mission Beach
Pigeon Lake
PIGEON LAKE
BUCK LAKE
Brazeau Dam
Elk River
19
WINFIELD
Pendryl
ALDER FLATS
12th BASE LINE
ROCKY MOUNTAINS FOREST RESERVE
Rose Creek
Wilson
Medicine
BLUFFTON
RIMBEY
Leedale
Carlos
FORSHEE
11th BASE LINE
11
Bingely
ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE
BENTLEY
81
20
Withrow
ECKVILLE
SYLVAN LAKE
116°
115°

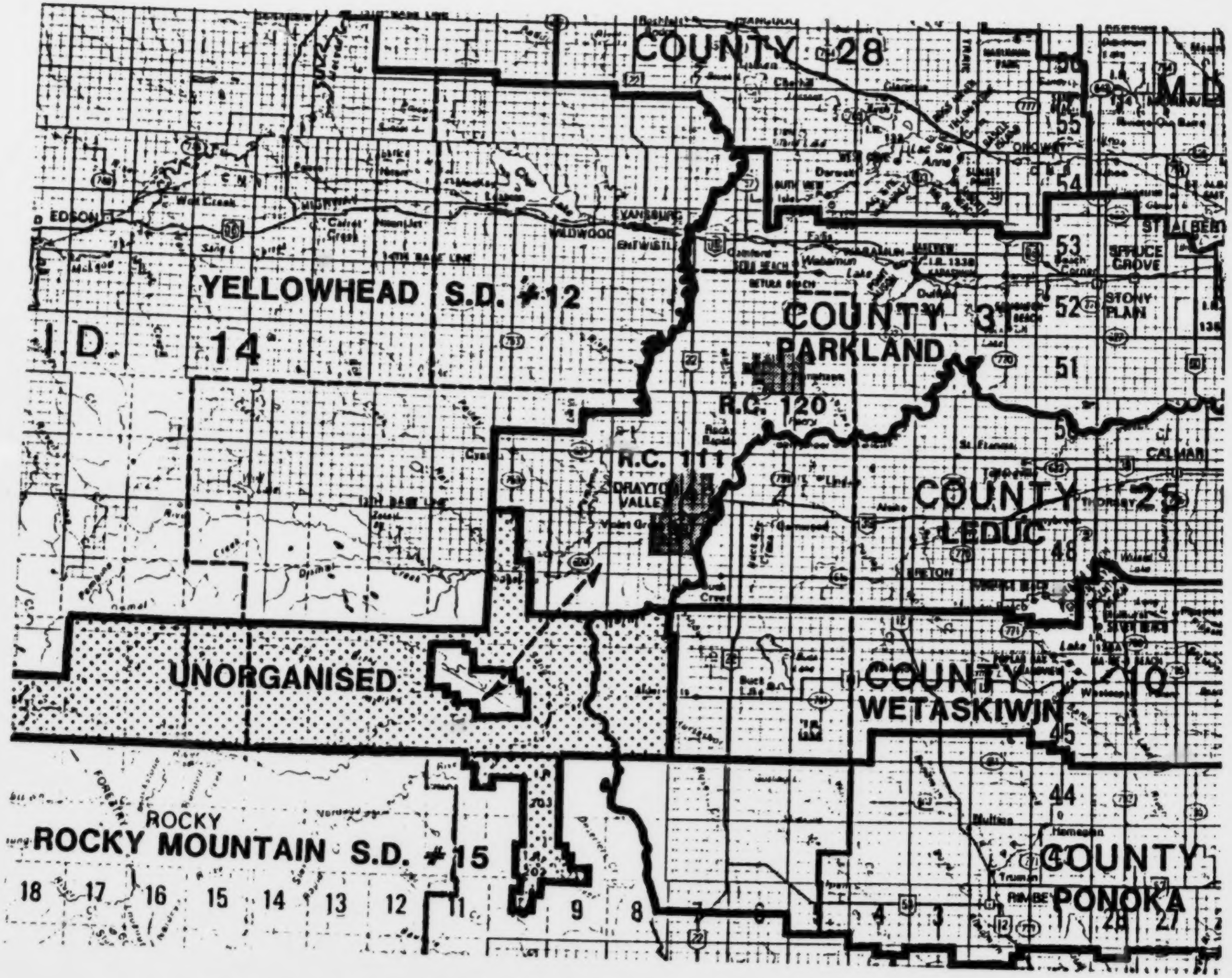
Source: Town of Drayton Valley General Municipal Plans (Various Years).
Inner Arc delineation


COUNTY 26
M.D.
PADDLE RIVER
NITON
CHIP LAKE
CARROT CREEK
BIGORAY
TOMAHAWK
COUNTY 31
HIGHVALE
CYN-PEM
D. 14
WESTPEM
COUNTY 25
BRAZEAU
RIVER
PECO
PEMBINA
CORAL
COUNTY 10
CRYSTAL
COLUMBIA
ROCKY
ALDER
MINNEHIK-BUCK LAKE
COUNTY
ST. ALBERT
SPRUCE GROVE
STONY PLAIN
CALMAR
RIMBEY
57
56
55
54
53
52
50
48
45
44
17
16
15
14
13
12
11
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
28
27

MAP 2-2 DRAYTON VALLEY AREA MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

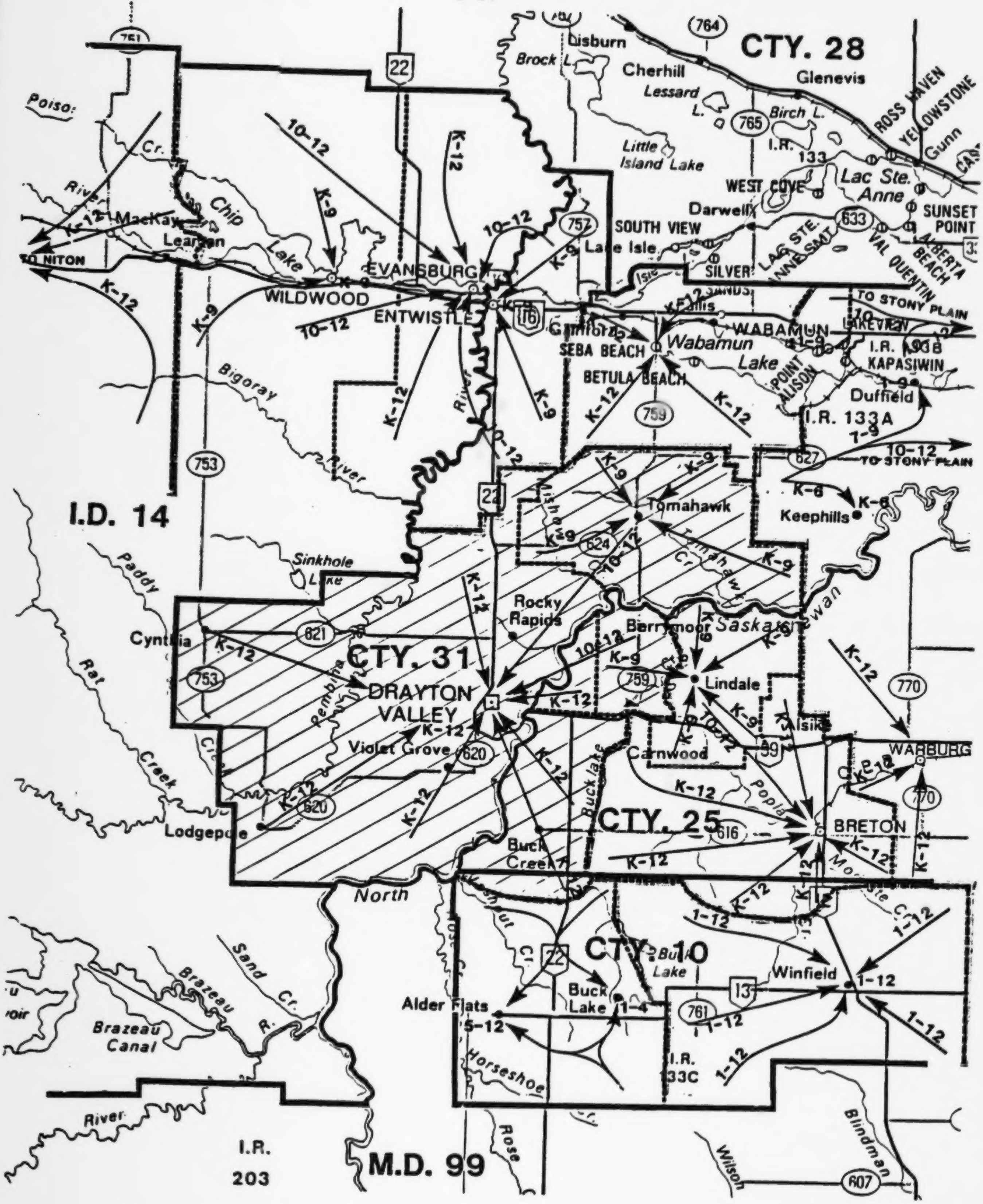
OIL/GAS FIELDS (E.R.C.B.) AND GAS PLANTS

(LINES TO MAIN OPERATIONS CENTRE)


COUNTY 28
MD
YELLOWHEAD S.D. #12
I.D. 14
COUNTY 31
PARKLAND
R.C. 120
R.C. 111
DRAYTON VALLEY
COUNTY 25
LEDUC
UNORGANISED
COUNTY 10
WETASKIWIN
ROCKY
ROCKY MOUNTAIN S.D. #15
COUNTY
PONOKA
EDSON
WILDWOOD
ENTWISTLE
EVANSBURG
SPRUCE GROVE
STONY PLAIN
ST. ALBERT
CALMAR
BRETON
RIMBEY
56
55
54
53
52
51
50
48
45
44
18
17
16
15
14
13
12
11
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
1
28
27

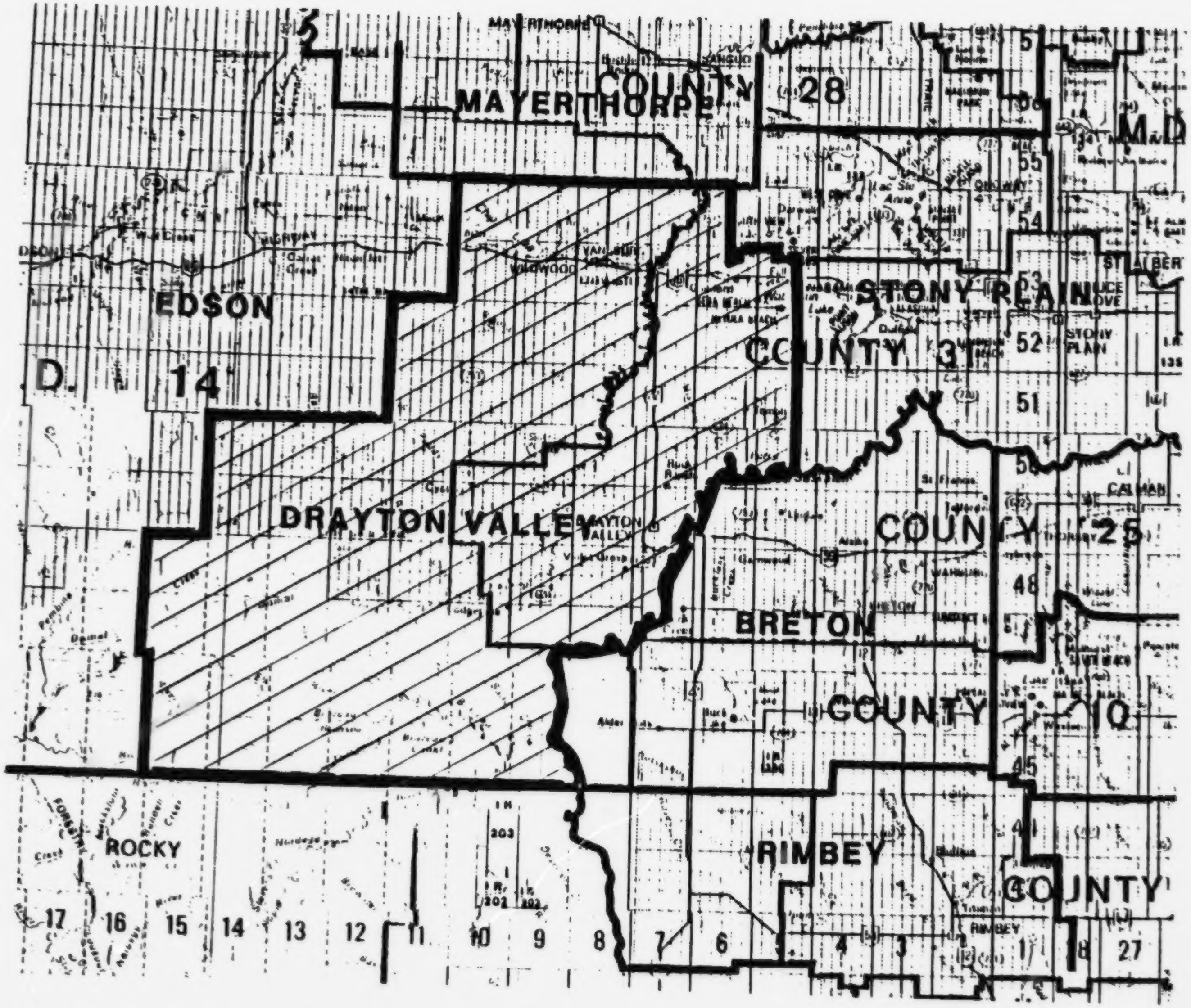
MAP 2-3 DRAYTON VALLEY AREA MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

SCHOOL SYSTEM BOUNDARIES


CTY. 28
CTY. 31
CTY. 25
CTY. 10
I.D. 14
M.D. 99
DRAYTON VALLEY
EVANSBURG
ENTWISTLE
WILDWOOD
WABAMUN
SEBA BEACH
BETULA BEACH
Tomahawk
Keephills
Lindale
Berrymoor
Rocky Rapids
Cynthia
Violet Grove
Lodgepole
Carnwood
BRETON
WARBURG
Winfield
Buck Lake
Alder Flats
Duffield
Glenevis
Darwell
Lac Ste. Anne
TO NITON
TO STONY PLAIN
K-12
10-12
K-9
1-12
I.R. 203

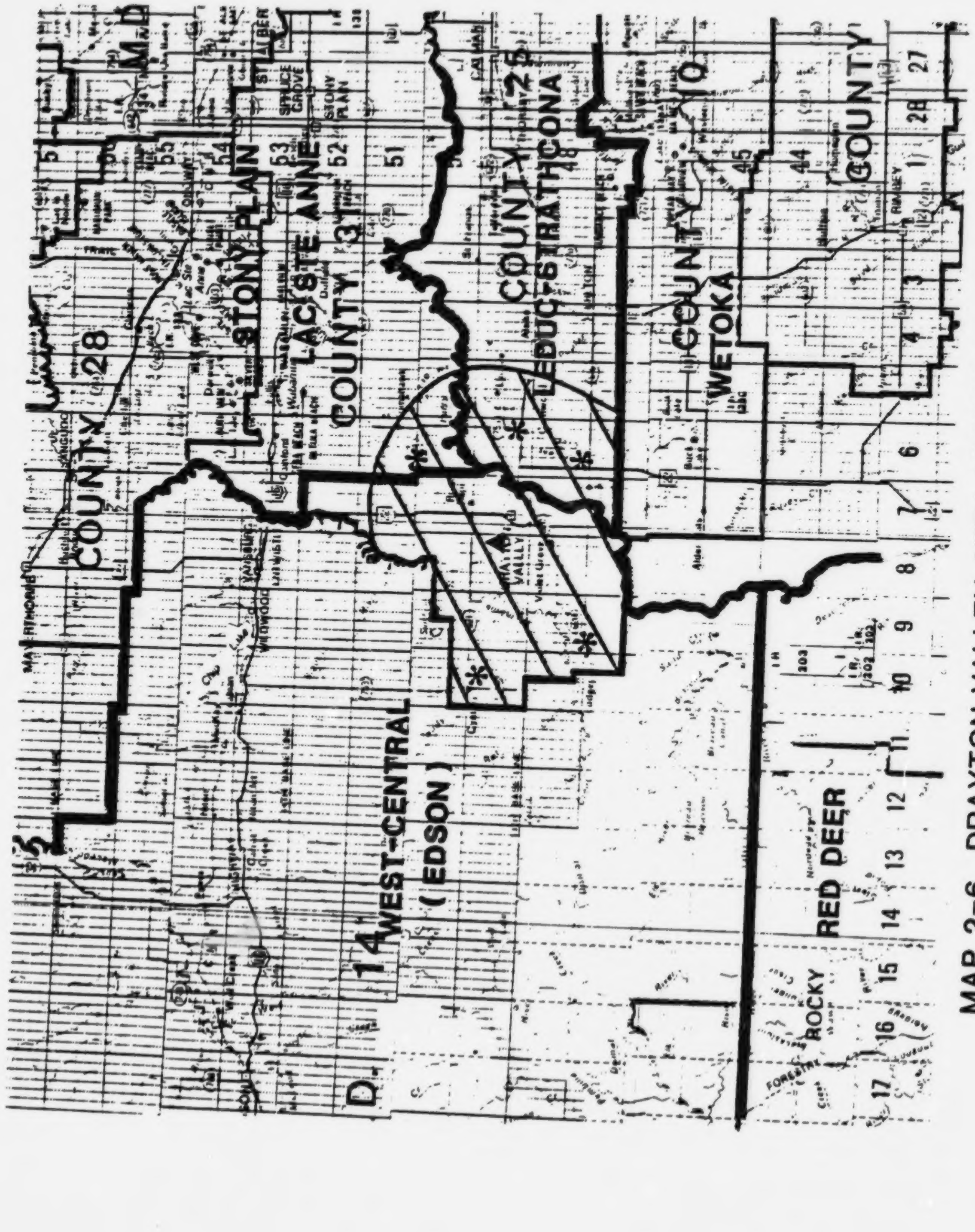
MAP 2-4 DRAYTON VALLEY AREA MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

(SENIOR HIGH) SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AREAS


MAYERTHORPE
COUNTY 28
M.D.
EDSON
D. 14
STONY PLAIN
COUNTY 31
DRAYTON VALLEY
COUNTY 25
BRETON
COUNTY 10
RIMBEY
COUNTY
ROCKY
5
56
55
54
53
52
51
50
48
45
41
17
16
15
14
13
12
11
10
9
8
7
6
4
3
1
18
27

MAP 2-5 DRAYTON VALLEY AREA MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

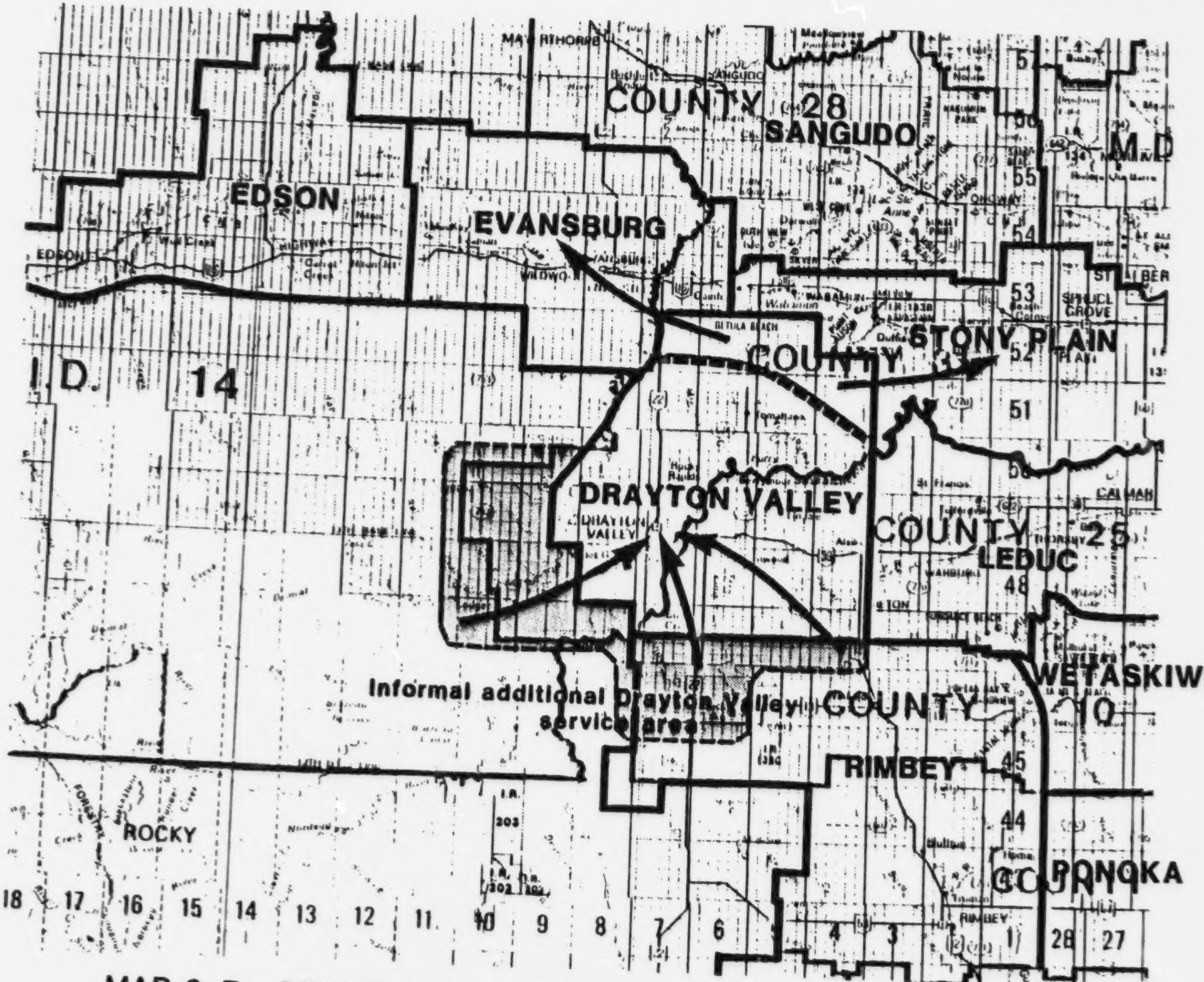
HOSPITAL DISTRICTS


COUNTY 28
M.D.
STONY PLAIN
ST. ALBERT
SPRUCE GROVE
LAC STE ANNE
COUNTY 31
COUNTY 25
LEDUC-STRATHCONA
COUNTY 10
WETOKA
COUNTY
DRAYTON VALLEY
WEST-CENTRAL
(EDSON)
14
D.
RED DEER
ROCKY
51
52
53
54
55
45
44
48
28
27
1
2
3
4
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17

MAP 2-6 DRAYTON VALLEY AREA MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

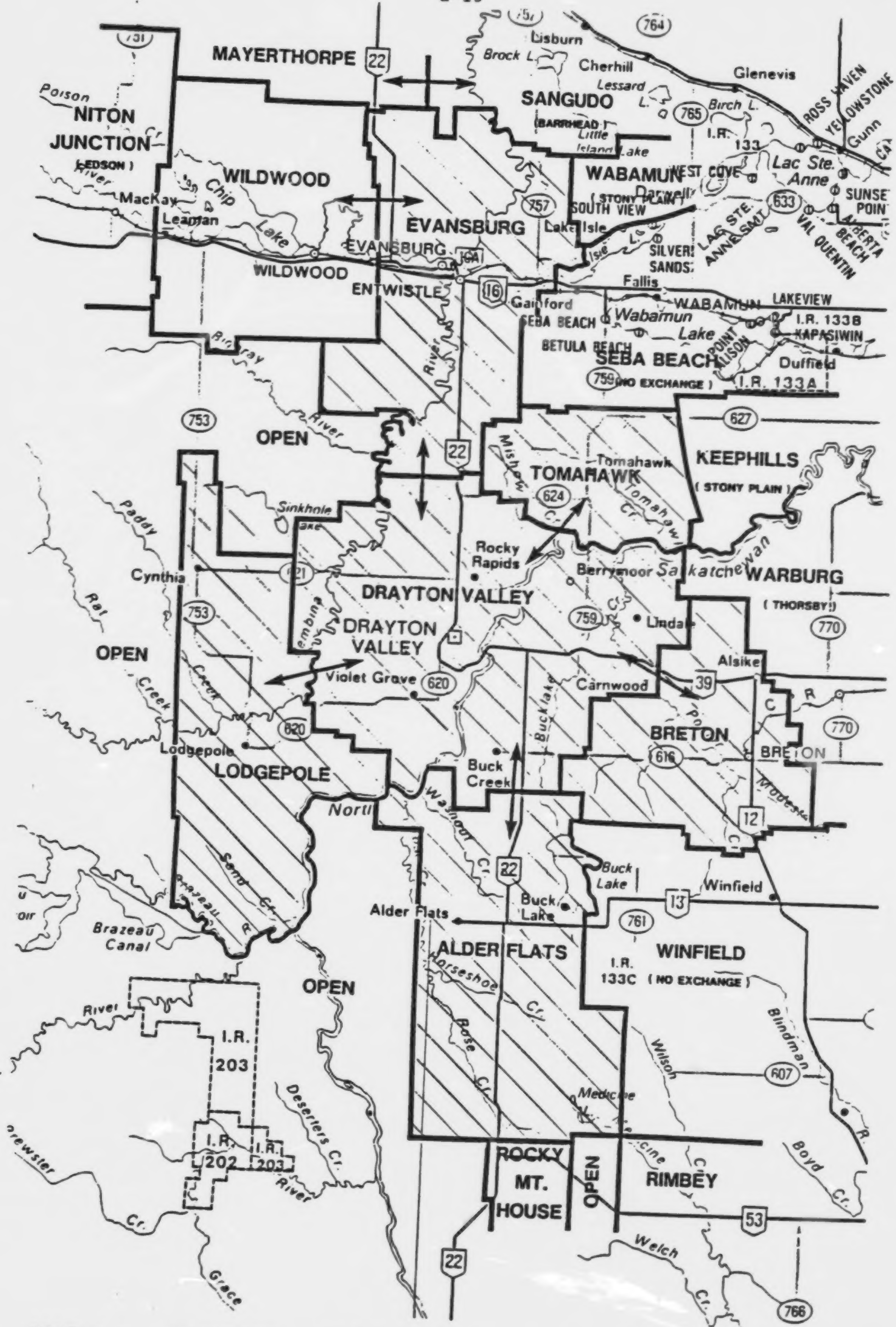
D.V. LANDFILL AUTHORITY AND HEALTH UNIT SYSTEMS

(* TRANSER STATIONS, ▲ MAIN LANDFILL)

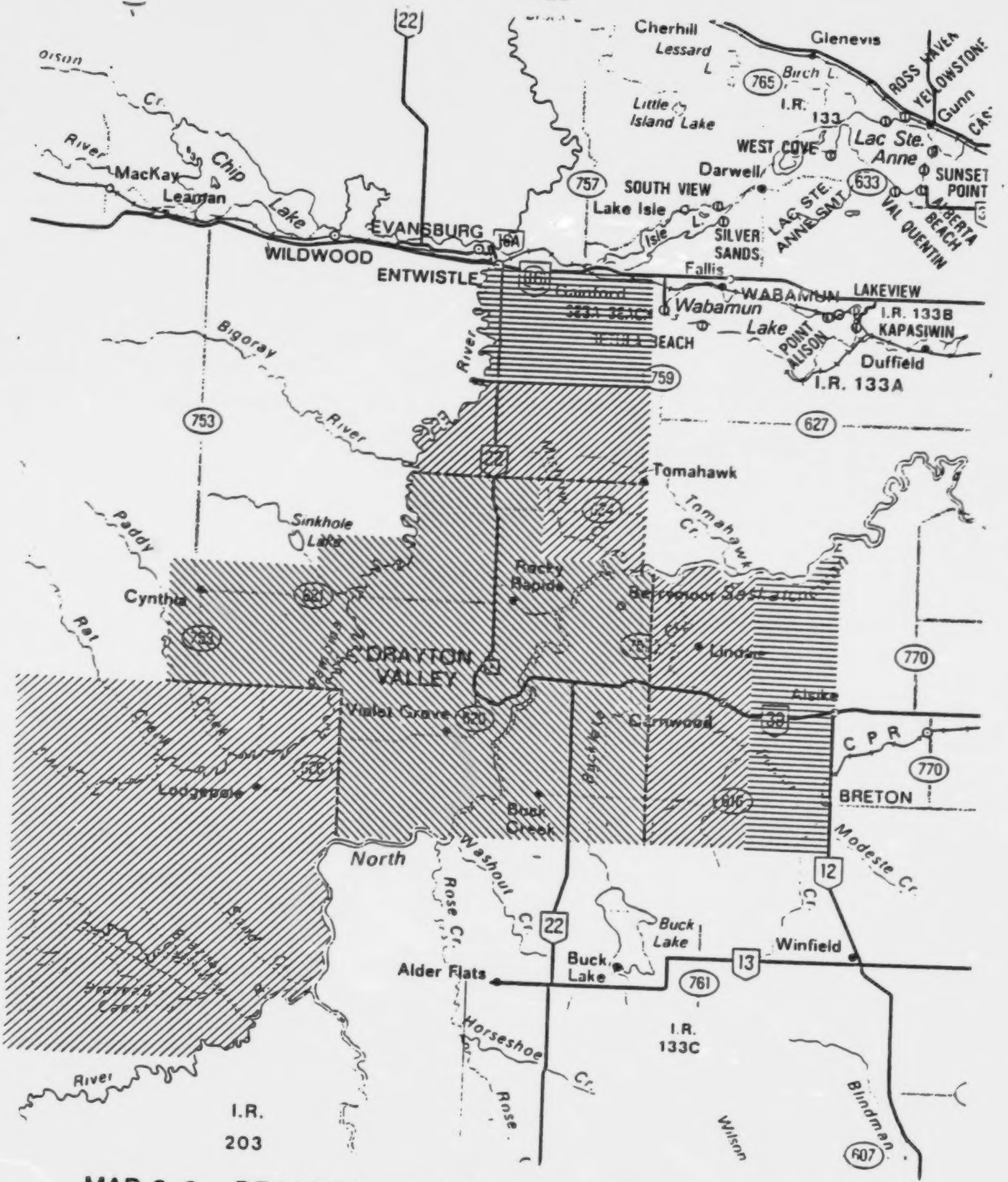

MAYERTHORPE
COUNTY 28
SANGUDO
M.D.
EDSON
EVANSBURG
STONY PLAIN
SPRUCE GROVE
ST. ALBERT
COUNTY
I.D. 14
DRAYTON VALLEY
COUNTY 25
LEDUC
Informal additional Drayton Valley service area
COUNTY
WETASKIWIN
10
RIMBEY
ROCKY
PONOKA
COUNTY
57
56
55
54
53
52
51
50
48
45
44
18
17
16
15
14
13
12
11
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
1
28
27

MAP 2-7 DRAYTON VALLEY AREA MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

ALBERTA AGRICULTURE : DISTRICT AGRICULTURIST DISTRICTS


MAYERTHORPE
NITON JUNCTION
(LEDSON)
WILDWOOD
MacKay
Leaman
Chip Lake
EVANSBURG
Evansburg
Wildwood
Entwistle
SANGUDO
(BARRHEAD)
Lisburn
Brock L.
Cherhill
Lessard L.
Glenevis
Birch L.
Little Island Lake
WABAMUN
(STONY PLAIN)
West Cove
Darwell
South View
Lake Isle
Silver Sands
Lac Ste. Anne
Ross Haven
Yellowstone
Gunn
Sunset Point
Alberta Beach
Val Quentin
Lac Ste. Anne Sault
I.R. 133
Fallis
Gainford
Seba Beach
Wabamun
Wabamun Lake
Lakeview
I.R. 133B
Kapasiwin
Betula Beach
Point Alison
Duffield
SEBA BEACH
(NO EXCHANGE)
I.R. 133A
OPEN
TOMAHAWK
Mishow Cr.
Tomahawk Cr.
KEEPHILLS
(STONY PLAIN)
Sinkhole Lake
Rocky Rapids
Berrymoor
Saskatchewan
WARBURG
(THORSBY)
Cynthia
Paddy Cr.
Rat Creek
OPEN
DRAYTON VALLEY
Drayton Valley
Pembina
Lindale
Violet Grove
Alsike
Carnwood
BRETON
Breton
Lodgepole
LODGEPOLE
Buck Creek
Buck Lake Cr.
North
Wabamun Cr.
Modeste Cr.
Sand Cr.
Brazeau R.
Brazeau Canal
Buck Lake
Winfield
Alder Flats
ALDER FLATS
Horseshoe Cr.
Rose Cr.
WINFIELD
I.R. 133C
(NO EXCHANGE)
OPEN
I.R. 203
I.R. 202
I.R. 203
River
Brewster Cr.
Deserters Cr.
Grace
Wilson
Medicine
Blindman R.
Boyd Cr.
ROCKY MT. HOUSE
OPEN
RIMBEY
Welch Cr.
751
22
757
764
765
633
16A
16
759
753
627
624
621
759
770
620
39
616
770
12
13
761
607
53
22
766

MAP 2-8 DRAYTON VALLEY AREA MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY


Cherhill
Glenevis
Lessard L.
Birch L.
765
Ross Haven
Yellowstone
Gunn
Little Island Lake
I.R. 133
Lac Ste. Anne
West Cove
Darwell
Sunset Point
757
South View
Lake Isle
633
Silver Sands
Lac Ste. Anne S.M.T.
Val Quentin
Alberta Beach
Olson Cr.
River
MacKay
Leaman
Chip Lake
Evansburg
16A
Wildwood
Entwistle
16
Fallis
Wabamun
Lakeview
Wabamun Lake
I.R. 133B
Kapasiwin
Point Alison
Duffield
I.R. 133A
759
627
22
Bigoray River
753
Tomahawk
Tomahawk Cr.
Paddy Cr.
Sinkhole Lake
Cynthia
621
Rocky Rapids
Berrymoor
Saskatchewan
Rat Cr.
753
DRAYTON VALLEY
Lindale
770
Alsike
Violet Grove
620
Carnwood
39
CPR
770
Lodgepole
616
Breton
Buck Creek
North
Washout Cr.
Rose Cr.
Modeste Cr.
12
22
Buck Lake
Winfield
13
Alder Flats
Buck Lake
761
I.R. 133C
Horseshoe Cr.
River
I.R. 203
Rose
Wilson
Blindman
607

MAP 2-9 DRAYTON VALLEY AREA MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY
TOWN OF DRAYTON VALLEY: FIRE AND RESCUE RESPONSE AREAS

▧ Primary Fire and Rescue Response Area (including Drayton Valley)

▨ Secondary Fire Response Area

☰ Primary Rescue Response Area

3. THE BASES FOR A NEW MUNICIPALITY:

3.1. The Original Study Areas Arrangement:

In establishing the original study areas arrangement the goal was to more than encompass the area or areas that were most likely to sensibly and logically define the ideal jurisdiction for any new local government that might be created in the Drayton Valley area. This strategy was intended to maximize the information likely to be needed to choose between a multiplicity of options.

On the basis of previous local campaigns and government studies it appeared that the immediate Lake Wabamun area, the associated power plants and coal mines, as well as the summer village and lakeshore communities around the lake, should remain firmly within Parkland County. Given this, it also seemed likely that the Gainford-Magnolia area related most strongly to the east-west Yellowhead corridor, and had only limited ties south to Drayton Valley. The most relevant part of Parkland to include in the study therefore appeared to be well-defined by that part of the Drayton Valley provincial electoral division located within Parkland (Map I-2). That part of the Drayton Valley provincial constituency within I.D. 14 also appeared to capture the bulk of the oil/gas activity within I.D. 14 but serviced from Drayton Valley. Together, it seemed logical and defensible to define the core study area in terms of the extent of the Drayton Valley provincial constituency lying north and west of the river.

While it was known that the greatest interest in the separate county issue, as expressed by more people, was concentrated in the

Drayton Valley area of Parkland, there appeared to be sufficient justification for also including parts of Leduc County especially, Wetaskiwin County possibly, and Clearwater M.D. consequentially. These areas were classed as 'secondary' study areas. The Chip Lake area of I.D. 14 was also included under this category. Although it appeared that this area was also strongly oriented east-west along the Yellowhead, rather than south to Drayton Valley, it was included for study purposes and was justified by reference to the Hospital District boundary (Map 2-5) and to the 1976 Leslie Committee recommendation that this part of the I.D. 14 be incorporated into Parkland County.

Later detailed study, particularly in relation to schooling patterns, revealed several imperfections in these boundaries and study area classification. Adjustments had to be made, but the related re-estimates were based of necessity on the data collected originally in the context of the initial study areas arrangement. Future sections of the report use these re-estimates and adjusted study areas; the present section is based on the original study areas arrangement (i.e. Map I-I).

3.2. Comparative Overview:

The base data collected originally, and statistical calculations based on this information, are presented in Tables 3-I to 3-5. The core study area of Parkland is easily the most significant component in terms of population and road kilometerage (Table 3-I). Its substantial population is predominantly located within a few miles of the Town of Drayton Valley. However, the overall population density is less than half of that for Parkland County as a whole, and less than one-third of the density for eastern Parkland. A large extent of the Parkland core study area is comparatively underdeveloped; this is indicated for instance in the relatively low roads density (Table 3.3). The I.D. 14 portion of the core study area is much less developed in terms of population and roads; the I.D. has minimal expenses in the area, but a considerable assessment base.

The Wetaskiwin and Leduc County secondary study areas are comparatively similar to the Parkland core study area in terms of density and extent of development, while the Clearwater area is similar to the I.D. 14 core study area situation. There are in fact no local roads, and probably no permanent residents at the present time, in this particular area of the M.D.

All study area components, with the exception of S.S.A. #4 (Chip Lake area), exhibit a heavy concentration of industrial assessment in their overall tax base (see Table 3-3; 1984 S.F.P. Eq. Ass. as a % of total eq. ass.). The major assessment category by far in virtually all the study areas is pipelines, complemented by healthy levels of machinery and equipment assessment (Table 3-5). By contrast, farm-land assessment is of limited significance in most of the study areas, in comparison with what might be expected in the average rural area.

The various combinations of study area components presented at the foot of the tables indicates more than sufficient population to justify the establishment of a separate local government for the general area. Road maintenance responsibilities (in terms of length) would be comparatively light for the most part, although it is conceivable that there would be additional or heavier responsibilities in the I.D. 14 area in relation to what are presently classified as 'resource roads.'

3.3. Fiscal Capacities:

For the most part the study area components have well above average fiscal capacities (see Table 3-3 and the averages presented in Table 4-3), with the main exception again being the Chip Lake area of I.D. 14. Virtually any combination of the study areas would almost certainly constitute an eminently feasible local government in terms of both the level and mix of assessment, in relation to the people that would have to be served and the roads that would have to be maintained.

TABLE 3-1: BASE DATA

Affected Municipalities and Study Areas	1984 POPULATION	1984 AREA IN SQ.KM.	1984 LOC.&SEC. ROADS (km)	1984 TOTAL EQUAL.ASSESS. $	1984 SFP EQUAL.ASSESS. $
PARKLAND COUNTY 31					
Existing County	23,950	3,737.21	2,570	373,701,830	241,998,840
Core Study Area	4,729	1,678.35	795	91,935,844	75,525,665
Remaining County	19,221	2,058.86	1,775	281,765,986	166,473,175
LEDUC COUNTY 25					
Existing County	13,296	3,524.00	2,896	177,546,540	120,070,770
Secondary study area 1	1,415	624.20	384	25,613,356	21,858,936
Remaining County	11,881	2,899.80	2,512	151,933,184	98,211,834
WETASKIWIN COUNTY 10					
Existing County	9,026	3,379.12	2,301	94,160,940	51,560,150
Secondary Study Area 2	1342	699.31	324	17,601,669	14.590,418
Remaining County	7,684	2,679.81	1,977	76,559,271	36,969,732
CLEARWATER MD 99					
Existing MD	9,201	18,659.37	2,453	188,511,190	162,760,660
Secondary Study Area 3	8	287.50	0	4,793,584	4,765,046
Remaining MD	9,193	18,371.87	2,453	183,717,606	157,995,614
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT 14					
Existing ID	8,119	26,493.01	2,341[1]	175,145,370	142,819,090
Core Study Area	29	3,084.74	53	36,534,061	36,349,767
Remaining ID	8,090	23,408.27	2,288[1]	138,611,309	106,469,323
Secondary Study Area 4	2,163	1,981.38	560	17,690,160	10,304,268
Remaining ID(ex.CSA&SSA4)	5,927	21,426.89	1,728[1]	120,921,149	96,165,055
NEW MUNICIPALITY OPTIONS (See Map 1-1, p. 1-7 for study areas delineation)					
A: CORE STUDY AREA (CSA)	4,758	4,763.09	848	128,469,905	111,875,432
B: CSA + SSA 1	6,173	5,387.29	1,232	154,083,261	133,734,368
C: CSA +SSAs 1-3	7,523	6,374.10	1,556	176,478,514	153,089,832
D: CSA + SSAs 1-4	9,686	8,355.48	2,116	194,168,674	163,394,100
E: CSA + SSA 4	6,921	6,744.47	1,408	146,160,065	122,179,700

SOURCES: Municipal officials; Area estimates and assessment equalization calculations by staff of the Policy & Research Section, Municipal Services Branch, Alberta Municipal Affairs.

[1] Includes 732 km of 'local forestry' road, maintained by Alberta Transportation for the Forest Service mainly.

TABLE 3-2: STUDY AREA PERCENTAGES: 1984 DATA

	Population	Area	Sec./Loc. Roads	Total Eq. Ass.	S.F.P. Eq. Ass.	Pipe-and Power-Line Eq. Ass.
C.S.A. Parkland as a % of Parkland Co.	19.7	44.9	30.9	24.6	31.2	30.9
C.S.A. Imp. Dist. 14 as a % of I.D. 14	0.3	11.6	2.3	20.9	25.5	30.5
S.S.A. 1. Leduc as a % of Leduc Co.	10.6	17.7	13.3	14.4	18.2	32.7
S.S.A. 2. Wetaskiwin as a % of Wetaskiwin Co.	14.9	20.7	14.1	18.7	28.3	39.7
S.S.A. 3. Clearwater as a % of Clearwater M.D.	0.1	1.5	-	2.5	2.9	5.1
S.S.A. 4. Imp. Dist. 14 as a % of I.D. 14	26.6	7.5	23.9	10.1	7.2	7.1
C.S.A. I.D. 14 + S.S.A. 4 as a % of I.D. 14	27.0	19.1	26.2	31.0	32.7	37.6

SOURCES: See Tables 3-1 and 3-4.

TABLE 3-3: BASE DATA - COMPARATIVE STATISTICS

Affected Municipalities and Study Areas	1984 POPULATION PER SQ.KM	1984 ROADS PER SQ.KM	1984 EQ. ASSESS. $ PER CAPITA	1984 EQ. ASSESS. $PER SQ. KM	1984 EQ. ASSESS. $ PER KM ROADS	1984 SFP.EQ.ASSESS. $ PER CAPITA	1984 % EQ. ASSESS. AS SFP.
PARKLAND COUNTY 31							
Existing County	6.41	0.69	15,603	99,995	145,409	10,104	64.8
Core Study Area	2.82	0.47	19,441	54,778	115,643	15,971	82.2
Remaining County	9.34	0.86	14,659	136,855	158,741	8,661	59.1
LEDUC COUNTY 25							
Existing County	3.77	0.82	13,353	50,382	61,308	9,031	67.6
Secondary study area 1	2.27	0.62	18,101	41,034	66,701	15,448	85.3
Remaining County	4.10	0.87	12,788	52,394	60,483	8,266	64.6
WETASKIWIN COUNTY 10							
Existing County	2.67	0.68	10,432	27,866	40,922	5,712	54.8
Secondary Study Area 2	1.92	0.46	13,116	25,170	54,326	10,872	82.9
Remaining County	2.87	0.74	9,963	28,569	38,725	4,811	48.3
CLEARWATER MD 99							
Existing MD	0.49	0.13	20,488	10,103	76,849	17,689	86.3
Secondary Study Area 3	0.03	0.00	599,198	16,673		595,631	99.4
Remaining MD	0.50	0.13	19,985	10,000	74,895	17,187	86.0
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT 14							
Existing ID	0.31	0.09	21,572	6,611	74,816	17,591	81.5
Core Study Area	0.01	0.02	1,259,795	11,843	689,322	1,253,440	99.5
Remaining ID	0.35	0.10	17,134	5,921	60,582	13,161	76.8
Secondary Study Area 4	1.09	0.28	8,179	8,929	31,590	4,764	58.2
Remaining ID(ex.CSA&SSA4)	0.28	0.08	20,402	5,643	69,978	16,225	79.5
NEW MUNICIPALITY OPTIONS (See Map 1-1, p. 1-7 for study areas delineation)							
A: CORE STUDY AREA (CSA)	1.00	0.18	27,001	26,972	151,498	23,513	87.1
B: CSA + SSA 1	1.15	0.23	24,961	28,601	125,068	21,664	86.8
C: CSA +SSAs 1-3	1.18	0.24	23,459	27,687	113,418	20,350	86.7
D: CSA + SSAs 1-4	1.16	0.25	20,046	23,238	91,762	16,869	84.2
E: CSA + SSA 4	1.03	0.21	21,118	21,671	103,807	17,653	83.6

SOURCE: Table 3-1.

TABLE 3-4: ASSESSMENT MIX DATA

Affected Municipalities and Study Areas	1984 EQUAL.ASSESS. NON-FARM LAND	1984 EQUAL.ASSESS. IN FARMLAND	1984 EQUAL.ASSESS. IN BLDS.&IMP.	1984 EQUAL.ASSESS. IN M&E	1984 EQUAL.ASSESS. IN PIPELINES	1984 EQUAL.ASSESS. IN POWERLINES	1984 EQUAL.ASSESS. IN OTHER
	$	$	$	$	$	$	$
PARKLAND COUNTY 31							
Existing County	58,991,309	15,033,684	84,877,737	27,947,569	64,014,420	122,551,810	285,301
Core Study Area	6,870,109	4,193,713	13,055,986	10,096,608	53,921,807	3,797,621	0
Remaining County	52,121,200	10,839,971	71,821,751	17,850,961	10,092,613	118,754,189	285,301
LEDUC COUNTY 25							
Existing County	28,923,017	35,386,245	50,375,860	10,424,996	47,773,250	4,328,220	334,952
Secondary study area 1	666,223	2,783,400	1,893,953	3,207,553	16,921,818	140,409	0
Remaining County	28,256,794	32,602,845	48,481,907	7,217,443	30,851,432	4,187,811	334,952
WETASKIWIN COUNTY 10							
Existing County	17,432,572	21,465,535	12,731,683	20,058,236	20,694,330	1,627,860	150,724
Secondary Study Area 2	2,766,849	1,765,499	1,283,241	2,922,561	8,819,973	43,546	0
Remaining County	14,665,723	19,700,036	11,448,442	17,135,675	11,874,357	1,584,314	150,724
CLEARWATER MD 99							
Existing MD	10,625,218	10,009,980	19,667,467	65,840,022	76,521,520	5,347,960	499,023
Secondary Study Area 3	20,250	16,361	95,481	510,113	4,151,379	0	0
Remaining MD	10,604,968	9,993,619	19,571,986	65,329,909	72,370,141	5,347,960	499,023
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT 14							
Existing ID	17,089,761	7,934,680	23,841,779	51,178,825	66,744,990	6,962,580	1,392,755
Core Study Area	149,422	29,681	1,790,715	12,118,022	18,495,856	3,950,365	0
Remaining ID	16,940,339	7,904,999	22,051,064	39,060,803	48,249,134	3,012,215	1,392,755
Secondary Study Area 4	2,737,508	4,346,538	1,858,208	3,513,173	4,799,178	435,555	0
Remaining ID(ex.CSA&SSA4)	14,202,831	3,558,461	20,192,856	35,547,630	43,449,956	2,576,660	1,392,755
NEW MUNICIPALITY OPTIONS							
A: CORE STUDY AREA (CSA)	7,019,531	4,223,394	14,846,701	22,214,630	72,417,663	7,747,986	0
B: CSA + SSA 1	7,685,754	7,006,794	16,740,654	25,422,183	89,339,481	7,888,395	0
C: CSA +SSAs 1-3	10,472,853	8,788,654	18,119,376	28,854,857	102,310,833	7,931,941	0
D: CSA + SSAs 1-4	13,210,361	13,135,192	19,977,584	32,368,030	107,110,011	8,367,496	0
E: CSA + SSA 4	9,757,039	8,569,932	16,704,909	25,727,803	77,216,841	8,183,541	0

SOURCES: Assessment Equalization Board work-sheets; study area estimates by Municipal Affairs staff, based on actual assessment data supplied by municipalities, and E.P. & P.L. data supplied by Departmental Industrial Assessors.

TABLE 3-5: ASSESSMENT MIX PERCENTAGES

Affected Municipalities and Study Areas	1984 TOTAL EQUAL.ASSESS. $	1984 % EQ. ASSESS. NON-FARM LAND	1984 % EQ. ASSESS. FARM LAND	1984 % EQ. ASSESS. BLDS. & IMP.	1984 % EQ. ASSESS. M&E	1984 % EQ. ASSESS. PIPELINES	1984 % EQ. ASSESS. POWERLINES	1984 % EQ. ASSESS. OTHER
PARKLAND COUNTY 31								
Existing County	373,701,830	15.8	4.0	22.7	7.5	17.1	32.8	0.1
Core Study Area	91,935,844	7.5	4.6	14.2	11.0	58.7	4.1	0.0
Remaining County	281,765,986	18.5	3.8	25.5	6.3	3.6	42.1	0.1
LEDUC COUNTY 25								
Existing County	177,546,540	16.3	19.9	28.4	5.9	26.9	2.4	0.2
Secondary study area 1	25,613,356	2.6	10.9	7.4	12.5	66.1	0.5	0.0
Remaining County	151,933,184	18.6	21.5	31.9	4.8	20.3	2.8	0.2
WETASKIWIN COUNTY 10								
Existing County	94,160,940	18.5	22.0	13.5	21.3	22.0	1.7	0.2
Secondary Study Area 2	17,601,669	15.7	10.0	7.3	16.6	50.1	0.2	0.0
Remaining County	76,559,271	19.2	25.7	15.0	22.4	15.5	2.1	0.2
CLEARWATER MD 99								
Existing MD	188,511,190	5.6	5.3	10.4	34.9	40.6	2.8	0.3
Secondary Study Area 3	4,793,584	0.4	0.3	2.0	10.6	86.6	0.0	0.0
Remaining MD	183,717,606	5.8	5.4	10.7	35.6	39.4	2.9	0.3
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT 14								
Existing ID	175,145,370	9.8	4.5	13.6	29.2	38.1	4.0	0.8
Core Study Area	36,534,061	0.4	0.1	4.9	33.2	50.6	10.8	0.0
Remaining ID	138,611,309	12.2	5.7	15.9	28.2	34.8	2.2	1.0
Secondary Study Area 4	17,690,160	15.5	24.6	10.5	19.9	27.1	2.5	0.0
Remaining ID(ex.CSA&SSA4)	120,921,149	11.7	2.9	16.7	29.4	35.9	2.1	1.2
NEW MUNICIPALITY OPTIONS								
A: CORE STUDY AREA (CSA)	128,469,905	5.5	3.3	11.6	17.3	56.4	6.0	0.0
B: CSA + SSA 1	154,083,261	5.0	4.5	10.9	16.5	58.0	5.1	0.0
C: CSA +SSAs 1-3	176,478,514	5.9	5.0	10.3	16.4	58.0	4.5	0.0
D: CSA + SSAs 1-4	194,168,674	6.8	6.8	10.3	16.7	55.2	4.3	0.0
E: CSA + SSA 4	146,160,065	6.7	5.9	11.4	17.6	52.8	5.6	0.0

SOURCE: Table 3-4.

4. THE EFFECTS AND IMPACTS ON EXISTING MUNICIPALITIES:

4.1. Introduction:

If a new local government was to be formed in the present situation there would be obvious effects and impacts on existing local governments serving the study areas. The following presentation dealing with these matters is based on slightly adjusted study areas, compared with those established at the outset. The applicable areas are indicated on Map 4-1. The new arrangement recognizes two study areas for Leduc County (one limited to the Bucklake Creek area westward, and one including this lesser area and extending eastward to incorporate the Breton senior high school attendance area). The new arrangement also recognizes three optional areas involving I.D. 14. The smallest includes that part of the original core study area which is unorganized for school purposes; the intermediate area corresponds with the original core study area part of I.D. 14; the largest area incorporates the core study area of I.D. 14 and the portion of the Chip Lake area encompassed by the Grand Trunk (Evansburg) senior high school attendance area. In some calculations reference is also made to the small portion of this school attendance area lying within Parkland County i.e. the Moon Lake-Magnolia area.

4.2. Diminution Generalities:

All the study area municipalities are obviously liable to be diminished if a new local government is created. In this context however it may be noted that all five are currently very large rural municipalities in one or several respects (population, area, road kilometerage, assessment, expenditures). Excepting those over 10,000 population the average county population is around 5650, while the average M.D. has a population of around 4457. Parkland and Leduc are particularly large rural municipalities (Table 3-1).

The diminution generalities pertaining to the study area municipalities are summarized in Table 4-1. These are expressed as the percentage reductions estimated to be associated with loss of the various adjusted areas identified on Map 4-1.

4.2.1. Parkland County:

The overall effect of the possible creation of a separate local government would be greatest for Parkland County. It may be inferred that both population and road densities in the diminished county would significantly increase (Table 3-3). Parkland would become more compact and more square, with the notable exception of the Lake Wabamun 'panhandle.'

In terms of assessment composition (Table 3-5) Parkland would experience a major decrease in the proportion attributable to pipelines, because of the great concentration of this form of assessment in the south-western areas. A much smaller decrease would apply to machinery and equipment assessment, and there would be a minimal decrease in the farmland proportion (but this would continue to be a rather insignificant category). The current major assessment category, powerlines, would become even more important in the diminished county.

There is a good measure of offsetting or balancing in the extent of the various diminutions. While a somewhat greater percentage of assessment compared to population would be lost, the diminished county would gain in terms of relief from responsibility for a comparatively large, and still developing, area. Road inventory and total assessment reductions appear to balance out. However, as will be noted later, because of very low expenditure effort on western roads and much higher expenditure demands from the more heavily-trafficked eastern roads, it is to be expected that the diminished county's road expenditures will decline by a lesser percentage than the indicated reduction in road inventory or assessment base.

4.2.2. Improvement District No. 14:

I.D. 14 is the other municipality which could be strongly affected by creation of a separate local government in the Drayton Valley area. Apart from the Chip Lake area the parts of the I.D. under study are virtually uninhabited with little need for much in the way of regular local roads. (However there is apparently a great demand for an increased/improved 'resource road' network serving the oilpatch.) The I.D. areas studied encompass disproportionately large amounts of assessment, the disparities being particularly great for the 'intermediate' area, and least so in the case of the most extensive 'maximum' area (incorporating Chip Lake and environs.) In contrast with Parkland, for I.D. 14 there is obviously a greater imbalance between the anticipated percentage reductions in the population and roads to be serviced, and the level of assessment loss, particularly industrial assessment.

Much of the imbalance would be eliminated under the 'maximum' diminution scenario. In this case population and road densities in the diminished I.D. would be slightly decreased. It would still cover a very large, mostly uninhabited area with settlement concentrated fairly narrowly along the Yellowhead Highway. The centrality and dominance of Edson, the present seat of local government in the area, would be accentuated in a diminished I.D. situation.

Such a massive reduction in I.D. 14 could interfere with the present active plans of the I.D. Advisory Council to incorporate as a regular municipal district (in the manner recently accomplished by the M.D. of Clearwater - formerly I.D. 10). The growing debate on I.D. incorporation has resulted in increased popular allegiance to the presently bounded unit. In addition it is believed that the I.D. population using the Evansburg schools are much more oriented east-west, to centres along the Yellowhead Highway, than south to Drayton Valley. The Hospital District furnishes the main contrary point of view.

If I.D. 14 was reduced by the 'intermediate' area (corresponding to the original core study area portion), the diminished I.D. would retain its present integrity in all but assessment terms, a key qualification for an I.D. hoping to incorporate with no increases in the rate of taxation. The area does happen to correspond fairly closely to the oil/gas-field servicing hinterland of Drayton Valley but the removal of this area from I.D. 14 would entail only a major loss in assessment and thus taxation revenue, since there are at present almost negligible municipal service expenses associated with the I.D.'s jurisdiction over this area.

The 'minimal' area referenced for I.D. 14 also has the potential to disrupt the I.D.'s incorporation plans. However, its significance, as well as the intermediate area's significance in this regard, will partly depend on how successful the diminished unit may be in adding to its assessment base through developments in other parts of the I.D. over the next few years. Against the provincial trend I.D. 14 was able to record a large increase in equalized assessment between 1984 and 1985, further accentuating its well above average fiscal capacity. A further increase is projected for 1986. It may well have sufficient 'excess' capacity now to comfortably incorporate even with a loss of territory. A definitive judgment on this issue should be delayed until the incorporation study, now under way, is completed.

As regards the assessment profile, I.D. 14, in common with Parkland County and Clearwater M.D., has only about one-quarter of the farmland proportion exhibited by the more obviously agricultural Counties of Leduc and, especially, Wetaskiwin (Tables 3-4, 3-5). It may be noted however that the Chip Lake area of I.D. 14 accounts for over half the I.D.'s farmland assessment. It is the I.D.'s agricultural core, but would not be quite so prominent if it was to be included in a Drayton Valley area municipality. Considered overall the assessment profile of a diminished I.D. 14 would remain little changed from the present situation. Pipelines would continue to be the most important assessment category, followed fairly closely by machinery and equipment. These two categories would continue to account for over two-thirds of the I.D.'s assessment.

4.2.3. Leduc County:

If the 'greater' area indicated on Map 4-1 happened to be included in a new Drayton Valley area local government, Leduc County would also be liable to experience a significant diminution, though to not quite the same extent as Parkland County or I.D. 14 (intermediate or maximum scenarios). The 'lesser' area referenced would involve fairly minor reductions in Leduc County's sphere of operations (Table 4-1).

For both areas there is a rough balance between the total assessment loss and reductions in population, area, and road inventory. However, a particular imbalance relates to the disproportionately large loss in pipe-line assessment. It is also likely that, as for Parkland, the reduction in road inventory will not translate into a commensurate reduction in net expenditures on road maintenance/construction. Whatever the percentage reduction in road inventory on account of loss of the west end the diminished county's roads budget will decrease by a lower percentage.

Regardless of the extent of any diminution, incorporation of either part of the existing Leduc County into another local government would have the effect of slightly increasing population and road densities in the diminished county. Leduc County would become a little less elongated, and the centrality of the county seat would be enhanced. An extensive diminution, involving the Breton area, would naturally increase the potential disruption, and especially so since it would come shortly after the major dislocation associated with the formation of a public school system in the City of Leduc.

In terms of assessment mix (Tables 3-4, 3-5) the major change would be a fairly significant decrease in the pipeline assessment proportion, currently the second most important category (after buildings and improvements). The only other decrease in signficance would be for machinery and equipment, but this is not such an important category for Leduc County as it is in the other study municipalities.

4.2.4. Wetaskiwin County:

The diminution indicated for Wetaskiwin County happens to be more extensive than that indicated for the 'lesser' area of Leduc County, so much so that it seems unlikely that Wetaskiwin County's west-end would be impacted unless the 'greater' extent of Leduc County was involved. The total assessment diminution would be greater than the diminution in the percentage of roads and people to be served. A disproportionately large amount of industrial and, especially, pipe-line assessment would be lost to the county.

Population and road densities would be increased slightly in a diminished Wetaskiwin County. The County would become slightly less elongated and the centrality of the county seat would be increased. In terms of assessment mix the major change would be a significant reduction in the proportion of pipeline assessment, currently a close second to farmland assessment in overall importance.

4.2.5. Clearwater M.D.:

The small area of the new M.D. of Clearwater considered in this study could most reasonably be included in a new Drayton Valley-centred local government only if the adjacent portion of Wetaskiwin County was similarly included. The area is presently accessed from Wetaskiwin County.

The Clearwater area is virtually uninhabited with no municipal road responsibilities at the present time. The diminution effects on the M.D. would mostly be nil or miniscule, although there would be a noticeable reduction in industrial assessment. Population and road densities would be virtually unchanged if the M.D. was to lose this area and a squaring off of the northern boundary would be effected. The assessment mix would similarly remain virtually unchanged.

The Clearwater area has recently been the object of an (unsuccessful) annexation bid by Wetaskiwin County. Out of this has emerged certain indications that, if there were to be any changes in local government responsibilities for the west end of Wetaskiwin County, possibly a majority of the area residents would presently prefer to be included within the M.D. of Clearwater, centred in Rocky Mountain House. The remaining residents appear to be roughly equally split between the status quo and inclusion in a Drayton Valley-centred local government.

Whatever diminutions might occur all five study area municipalities would still remain well above average in terms of population size (see Table 4-2). In area terms the three counties considered are presently close to the average, but the three would fall to distinctly below the average should they be diminished. I.D. 14 and Clearwater M.D. are among the most extensive municipalities in Alberta at the present time, and this would remain the case if somehow diminished.

All five study area municipalities are currently well above average in terms of absolute assessment categories, though Wetaskiwin County is clearly the poor relation in the group. If diminished all five would continue to be well above the average in absolute terms, although Wetaskiwin County would move significantly closer to the average level.

4.3. Fiscal Capacity Shifts:

Fiscal capacity statistics neatly summarize the net effect of the various diminutions discussed above. They inter-relate (equalized) assessment base measures with rough indicators of the municipality's servicing responsibilities. As is alluded to in the I.D. 14 submission (Appendices 1.1.2. and 1.1.3.) comparative fiscal capacity statistics are most useful where the level and, especially, the unit cost of servicing are not the subject of extreme variation between jurisdictions. While such factors may vary widely within each jurisdiction, and between jurisdictions in relation to particular services, it is considered that, overall, there is no better single indicator of the relative ability of a unit to provide a standard 'basket' of municipal goods and services, for any given standard level of taxation. When compared with averages in the present context the fiscal capacities can also indicate the general capability of a particular municipality to withstand various extents of diminution. Fiscal capacities relating to the original study areas arrangement have already been presented (Table 3-3). The present treatment differs by its focus on the adjusted areas (see Map 4-1). The revised fiscal capacity shifts are presented in Table 4-3.

In the recent period (1981-84) fiscal capacities for all five study municipalities have exhibited generally healthy growth trends (Table 4-4). This has especially been the case for I.D. 14, while Parkland's growth has been least impressive. It should be noted however that the healthy trend appears to have ended, in most cases, with the 1985 equalized assessments (Table 4-5). The declines may be explained partly by the recent economic down-turn, and partly by policy changes affecting machinery and equipment assessment, which took effect initially for the 1985 equalized assessments. Further policy-related reductions in this form of assessment may be anticipated in 1986 and 1987, signaling the probability of a continued declining trend, after well over a decade of generally impressive assessment growth. In contrast to the situation which may have pertained earlier this decade new assessment growth cannot be counted on so readily to help cushion any adverse effects, on existing municipalities, that may be associated with the establishment of a new local government around Drayton Valley. There will be an upward pressure on tax rates regardless of whether or not such a change is made.

The main exception to the above generalizations is I.D. 14 where the addition of a considerable amount of new assessment (associated mainly with the Robb gas plant and Coal Branch developments) boosted the 1985 equalized assessment. The I.D. is also fortunate in having no M and E assessment liable to reduction by the new policy. A further increase in equalized assessment is expected for the 1986 figure, mainly on account of the Obed Marsh thermal coal mine. The I.D.'s assessment growth will continue to contrast with the general provincial trend of decline. The longer term assessment growth prospects for I.D. 14 also appear to be comparatively good (oil/gas production; coal mines; forest products; and tourism development).

4.3.1. Parkland County:

Parkland is very well-endowed assessment-wise, not only in comparison with the sample averages, but also in comparison with other study municipalities (Table 4-3). If diminished, the county's fiscal capacities, in area and road kilometerage terms, would be even further strengthened. Slight declines are indicated in per capita terms, but the diminished Parkland levels would remain well above average. This continuing strength is rooted in the healthy proportion of industrial assessment in the overall base.

The recent decreases in Parkland's fiscal capacities might have been more significant were it not for the fact that the new Keephills generating plant, and the associated new Highvale mine, became incorporated in the county's 1985 equalized assessment. While the declining trend is anticipated to probably continue for the next two years at least, Parkland is not without some future prospects for industrial development, e.g. the proposal by Dome Petroleum, in partnership with Trans Alta Utilities, for a $250 million carbon dioxide recovery plant at Lake Wabamun. Also, despite the decline trend it is expected that Parkland will continue to exhibit well above average fiscal capacities (because of the anticipated province-wide extent of the current declining assessment trend).

4.3.2. Leduc County:

Though not quite so well-endowed as Parkland assessment-wise, Leduc County's fiscal capacities are likewise comfortably above average. This is mainly on account of a very healthy proportion of industrial assessment, a major part of which relates to the Nisku Industrial Park and Edmonton International Airport in the vicinity of the City of Leduc. The other major component of industrial assessment relates to pipelines, which are particularly concentrated in the west end of the county (see Table 3-5). If diminished, the indications are that the fiscal capacity measures will fall slightly, but the new levels are likely to remain comfortably above the average. This would be the case whether the county was diminished by the 'lesser' or 'greater' areas discussed earlier.

Trend-wise, the recent period of growth in fiscal capacities ended with a distinct levelling-off in 1984, when a peak appears to have been reached. The prediction of future fiscal capacity trends is fraught with particular difficulties in the case of Leduc County. A massive increment in assessment can be anticipated in the early 1990's when at least the first of two Genesee generating units is due to be operational. It should also be noted however that the City of Leduc has expressed an interest in annexing the Airport and Nisku Park.

In terms of 1984 equalized assessment dollars the two Genesee units have been estimated at slightly over $100 million, which is equivalent to around 60% of the present equalized assessment. While these could potentially constitute a massive increment in a short period it is interesting to note that the county's equalized assessment grew by almost $60 million in just two years between 1981 and 1983. The Genesee growth may be needed simply to maintain the status quo over the longer-term, especially if the current decline trend continues, and certainly if there ever was to be a successful annexation bid by the City of Leduc. (Up to around 25 to 30% of the existing county assessment, accounted for by the airport and the industrial park, is liable to be affected by a City annexation application.)

From an overall perspective it is considered that the Genesee prospect will help to ensure continued above average fiscal capacities for Leduc County well into the next decade. It would be injudicious however to anticipate a massive boost from the Genesee units because they will probably be needed to offset major annexation-related reductions, and to help recover the longer-term growth trend that the municipality has become accustomed to over the past decade or so.

4.3.3. Wetaskiwin County:

The obvious poor relation among the group of study municipalities, Wetaskiwin County also falls (just) below the sample average fiscal capacity in per capita terms. Nevertheless, in per road kilometre terms its fiscal capacity does rate fairly comfortably above average. It is also slightly above average in terms of industrial assessment per capita and as a percentage of total assessment.

The county's key fiscal capacities would weaken slightly if its territory happened to be diminished on the west end, but the existing relationships with the average would hold. Of the three counties included in the study Wetaskiwin is clearly the one with the least room for manoeuvre, and the greatest risk of an adverse impact if it was to be diminished. This relatively precarious state of affairs is underlined by the recent, particularly large, decrease in equalized assessment (by 14.4% between 1984 and 1985), and by the fact that, unlike the other study municipalities, there is little in the way of future major industrial development/assessment growth prospects.

4.3.4. Clearwater M.D.:

Formed in 1985 out of I.D. 10 the M.D. of Clearwater was an obvious candidate for incorporation on the basis of its well above average fiscal capacities in per capita and per road kilometre terms. Of all five study municipalities it registers the highest levels of industrial assessment in per capita and percentage terms. Its fiscal capacities would be almost negligibly affected if its territory was diminished by the area indicated. The M.D.'s equalized assessment is currently on the decline however, down by 11.9% in 1985, partly on account of a large net decrease in M and E assessment. The latter trend can be expected to continue for the next two years at least. Notwithstanding this decline it is obvious that the M.D.'s fiscal capacity will continue to be well above average with or without the Rose Creek area.

4.3.5. I.D. 14:

The existing situation in I.D. 14 mirrors closely in many respects that noted above for Clearwater M.D. On fiscal capacity grounds at least it too is an obvious candidate for incorporation. In contrast to the other study municipalities its fiscal capacity strength is understated by the use of 1984 data. Going against the provincial trend the I.D. registered a healthy increase in assessment between 1984 and 1985, and there is the certainty of a further increase in the 1986 equalized assessment. (The probable increase will be around 8% over 1985, based on 1985 ratios and assumptions.)

The 1984-85 9.5% increase in assessment amounted to a gain of about $16.6 million which contrasts with a possible diminution of roughly similar magnitude associated with the adjusted 'minimal' area discussed earlier. In the longer-term there are also good prospects for future industrial development, mainly in the western areas of the I.D. These factors encourage the view that the I.D. will remain a strong candidate for a successful incorporation, even if some territory was given up to any new Drayton Valley area local government. It would nevertheless be important to ensure absolutely that the provision of a separate local government for this particular area in no way jeopardized the future extension of direct and affordable local government to the more than 8000 persons now resident in I.D. 14.

4.4. Current Municipal Finances:

Clearly, the five study municipalities, with the occasional exception of Wetaskiwin County, are markedly different from the average incorporated rural municipality in certain respects. In particular, they are comparatively large in population terms, and are well-endowed assessment-wise. It can also be inferred from these characteristics that the study municipalities are relatively limited in the intensity and extent of the farm-based agricultural development that is normally featured in the average incorporated rural municipality in Alberta (again, Wetaskiwin County would be the probable exception to this generalization). Given such contrasts it is to be expected that the municipal finances of the study municipalities will also differ markedly from the average as a matter of course.

4.4.1. Gross and Net Expenditures:

The comparatively strong fiscal capacities discussed earlier appear to be associated with comparatively low levels of expenditure effort among the study municipalities (Table 4-6). The extent of the discrepancy in individual cases is closely related to the relative fiscal capacity, expenditure effort being particularly low in the case of I.D. 14, Clearwater M.D. and Parkland County, but not so low for Wetaskiwin County. Nevertheless, the average rural municipality is making significantly greater expenditure effort than the study municipalities, encouraging the view that there is much scope for most of them to comfortably absorb any expenditure rate increases that might be associated by loss of territory to a new jurisdiction. It may also be inferred that there is considerable scope for industrial properties in particular to reasonably bear a higher rate of taxation in support of any additional expenditures which might be associated with the formation of a new municipality.

While relatively strong fiscal capacities underlie the comparatively low expenditure efforts among the study municipalities, it appears that their relatively large population sizes are a major factor underlying below average per capita operating expenditures Table 4-7). This is almost certainly the case in Parkland County where population density is over five times the average (and would be around eight times greater without its western one-third). Such densities influence the extraordinary presence of certain municipal services that are not usually found as major functions in rural municipalities, e.g. policing and planning. On average over the past four years these two functions have amounted to around $40 per capita in terms of gross operating expenditures ($25 per capita net). Parkland appears to benefit considerably from economies of scale in its operation, and while there is the possibility that these could be slightly diminished by the loss of its west end, it is more probable that the higher density and greater compactness of the diminished unit would make for enhanced efficiencies.

Of the five study municipalities Leduc County is consistently the biggest spender on municipal services, at a level only slightly below the average (even though its population density is over three times this average). In comparison with the other study and sample municipalities, the county is unusual in a few respects: a high level of water function expenses (though these are completely offset by revenues, eliminating any net costs); comparatively high social services expenditure (again mostly recovered by revenues); and, most notably, in gross terms and in comparison with the other study municipalities, well above average expenditures on transportation services. The latter appears to be the main distinguishing factor setting Leduc apart from the other four, and the county does have an unusually large extent of roads in relation to its area.

Wetaskiwin County has tended to be the low spender in the study group, especially in net terms. It appears to be a fairly lean operation with no extraordinary servicing, except for a more pronounced Agriculture Services Board effort. It seems to be wringing the most out of the economies of scale available to it, while contenting itself with a fairly basic range and level of servicing. As with Parkland it is more probable that operating efficiencies would be enhanced than deteriorate if Wetaskiwin County lost the west end and assumed a more compact shape. The west end has lower population and road densities, tending to increase both per capita operating costs and the likely need for additional, comparatively expensive, road development.

Clearwater M.D. was I.D. 10 during the 1981-84 period referenced here. As an I.D. it was enabled to avoid some expenditures for administration and transportation on account of provincial government subsidization. While these subsidies are in the process of being phased out they still contribute to some understating of expenditures and net costs for the improvement districts, in comparison with the average incorporated rural municipality. In general, over the study period the subsidies appear to have more than offset the natural tendencies influencing more expensive operations in such extensive areas, being mostly unsettled, and also comparatively remote from major supply centres. The very low population and road densities limit the extent to which economies of scale may be realized, but, as was indicated earlier, there is considerable scope for increased expenditure effort, some of which has become unavoidable because of the elimination of all remaining subsidies consequent upon incorporation.

Improvement District No. 14 has also been characterized by well below average expenditures in comparison with the sample averages. The disparity is most noticeable in terms of the net costs of general administration and transportation services where there has been subsidization in the past. As the I.D.'s finances are regularized there will be upward pressure on expenditures. Tax rate changes will vary depending on the extent of future assessment growth: decreases in the tax rate are not inconceivable. Any loss of territory to a new local government in the Drayton Valley area will in all probability only reduce expenditures to a minimal extent. Depending on the future extent of the assessment base, tax rates may or may not increase. However, as will be noted later, the current tax rates in the I.D. appear to be inordinately low, and, as indicated earlier, there appears to be considerable scope for increased expenditure effort. Much change in I.D. 14's finances may be anticipated whether or not territory is lost to a new jurisdiction: nevertheless, it will be important to ensure that the remainder of the I.D. can still comfortably incorporate at tax rates which are fair and reasonable, though not as excessively low as seems to be the case presently and imminently.

4.4.2. General Administration and Transportation/Public Works:

After transportation services the second-most important expenditure category in virtually all cases is general administration (F.12). It is here that the economies of scale available to the three counties studied are particularly prominent. In each case the per capita levels of gross and net expenditure are well below the selected sample averages. Both Clearwater M.D. (then I.D. No. 10) and I.D. 14 are extremely below average on this statistic, partly on account of the economies available from their relatively large populations but mostly on account of the provincial government subsidization or assumption of certain general administration expenses. All the study municipalities will remain comparatively large in population terms if territory was lost to a new municipality, and it seems likely that considerable economies of scale will continue to be realizable in relation to this particular function.

Far and away the major rural municipal service is transportation, or public works, - being mainly road maintenance and construction (F.31/32). It generally accounts for around two-thirds of all expenditures, net or gross. The latest road inventory data for the study municipalities and the sample averages are presented in Table 4-8. Parkland County is relatively well endowed with paved and oiled kilometerage in comparison with both the study group and the sample averages. It also has the lowest percentage of road surfaces which are simply graded earth. Leduc County exhibits a roughly similar profile to Parkland but has a slightly lesser extent of the better surfaces. Wetaskiwin County, in turn, is not quite so well-endowed surface-wise as Leduc, with even less of the better surfaces and significantly more of the worst surface-type. Both Clearwater M.D. and I.D. No. 14 have predominantly gravelled surface roads, and a below average extent of the poorer graded surfaces.

The study municipalities' expenditure efforts on this service are below average, especially in the case of Clearwater and I.D. 14, and, to a lesser extent, Parkland (Table 4-9). Nevertheless, Parkland County clearly exhibits the highest level of transportation service expenditures per kilometre, gross or net. In net terms the Parkland level is in fact double the nearest study municipality, and is over four times the sample averages. This latter order of magnitude of difference is comparable to the order of magnitude difference in population densities (while the road densities are closely comparable). The county-wide average statistics are potentially the most misleading for Parkland because of the great variation in population density across the county, especially between the west and east. Obviously per km. expenditures are likely to be greatest in the case of the much more highly trafficked eastern roads, with the western roads probably accounting for around one-quarter or one-third of the per kilometre expenditure for the county as a whole. As a consequence it is likely that the expenditure effort on western roads falls well below the already comparatively low county-wide level.

Such discrepancies are also to be expected, if to a lesser extent, in the case of Leduc County. A large, and perhaps disproportionately large, amount of service expenditures is required in the east end around Nisku and in the acreage areas. The net expenditures per kilometre in the western areas are probably at least one-third less than the county-wide statistic, and around the average for the three other study municipalities. For both Parkland and Leduc Counties therefore the likelihood is that their western area roads account for disproportionately low percentages of the total transportation services budget in any given year, in comparison with western road kilometerage as a percentage of the total county road kilometerage. For most other services it can be fairly safely assumed that unit expenditures (especially per capita statistics) are comparatively constant across a particular jurisdiction.

With regard to the other study municipalities the I.D. No. 14 transportation expenditure statistics appear to reflect a greater level of subsidy than is the case for Clearwater M.D.. The latter, as I.D. No. 10, appears to have experienced a virtual elimination of the subsidy during the four year period. Instead of receiving a subsidy the municipality is now responsible for all (non-forest reserve) service expenditures, but is also now entitled to a partly off-setting Rural Road Grant.

The Wetaskiwin County statistics are probably closest to the actual current situation in the west end of the three counties studied. The discrepancy in densities between the west end and the county as a whole is significantly less than is the case in the other two counties. The county is nevertheless comparatively densely developed in relation to the sample averages, and this helps to explain why all the study municipalities range above these averages in expenditure per kilometre terms.

4.4.3. Revenue Patterns:

The average rural municipality, based on those sampled, manages to offset about 45% of its function expenditures with function-specific revenues. The study municipalities, with the exception of Leduc County, depend on general revenues to a greater extent, function cost recovery rates ranging from as low as around 20% (I.D. 14) - mainly on account of the absence of a Rural Road Grant - to 35% (Wetaskiwin County) (see Table 4-10). This contrast is probably a result of relatively high conditional rural road grants to the sample municipalities (on account of their relatively low fiscal capacities), and the easier dependence of the study municipalities on general taxation revenues (on account of the relatively high fiscal capacities). Nevertheless, it might be concluded that most of the study municipalities - with the possible exception of I.D. 14 - have the capacity to achieve higher function cost-recovery rates should such a strategy be necessary to cushion any adverse financial effects which might ensue from their diminution. Perhaps such a strategy would also result in higher operating efficiencies for certain functions. Such possibilities could not be raised so readily if the study municipalities' function cost-recovery rates were above average.

Because of their comparatively large populations, and/or expenditure-reducing subsidies in the case of I.D.'s, the study municipalities tend to exhibit comparatively low operating revenue requirements in per capita terms (see Table 4-11). The healthy levels of industrial assessment also render such a statistic less meaningful than might otherwise be the case. This assessment is readily available for tapping via general taxation, limiting the need for non-tax/own-source revenue-raising efforts. It might again be noted that the very low level of function revenues for I.D. 14 and Clearwater M.D. (formerly I.D. 10) is largely a consequence of the absence of a rural road grant to I.D.'s (because of the other subsidies).

General revenue details (Table 4-12) reveal well below average levels of unconditional grant per capita for the study municipalities, generally reflecting their relative fiscal capacity strength. Note that Wetaskiwin County fares significantly better than the others in the study group, reflecting its 'poor relation' status in fiscal capacity terms. A relatively new equitable grant formula is being employed by the Province for the distribution of unconditional municipal assistance grants. The formula features relative fiscal capacity as a major determinant of the grant awarded. Therefore, if the study municipalities did experience reduced fiscal capacities on account of diminution the new formula would likely result in an increase in the unconditional grant payable. However, because the formula grant is presently being phased in over several years there are still discrepancies between the calculated equitable grant and the actual grant paid (mainly on account of a desire to avoid decreases). At present the Counties of Parkland and Leduc are inequitably low grant cases, and can expect to experience relatively large increases in grant over the next year or two at least. Both Wetaskiwin County and I.D. 14 are very close to, but still slightly above, their calculated equitable grant levels. Clearwater M.D. was fixed at the equitable grant level when it became incorporated.

Own-source general revenue-raising in the case of the study municipalities has either always been low, as in the case of Leduc County, or has been on a steeply declining trend recently, to the extent that current levels fall below the average. It is possible that these revenues have been particularly sensitive to general economic conditions, at least as far as the study municipalities have been concerned. Therefore, assuming the recent economic recovery is not reversed there may be readier opportunity to regain the more respectable levels of a few years ago.

General taxation is the most significant revenue source for the study municipalities by a large margin. In equalized mill rate terms all the study municipalities, with the notable exception of Leduc County, have below average rates of total taxation, with Clearwater/I.D. 10 and I.D. 14 falling well below average (see Table 4-13).

The total requisitions rate of taxation is comparatively similar for all study municipalities, and most are very close to the average, but Clearwater/I.D. 10 appears to be something of an exception. This is obvious when the rate of taxation for supplementary school requisitions is concerned. The relevant school authority appears to have been in a position to make relatively limited demands on the then I.D.'s significant assessment base. However, all the study municipalities appear to have benefitted from below average rates of supplementary school requisitions in recent years.

Municipal taxation is almost exclusively 'general' taxation for both the study and sample groups. (Functionalized special levies are negligible in all cases.) Equalized municipal mill rates, averaged over the past four years, have been well below average for all the study municipalities - with the curious exception of Leduc County. It is difficult to explain the latter discrepancy without more detailed investigation. The high rate may reflect: extraordinary servicing involving high net costs; particularly high service levels, in certain areas, at least; intense construction or capital works activity, financed in large part from general revenues; or, less efficient servicing overall. Some or all of such factors must be operating to explain the major difference between Leduc County and its sister counties to the immediate north and south.

Apart from Leduc County it seems clear that the existing study municipalities are well positioned currently, in comparative tax rate terms, to comfortably withstand any increase in taxation that might accompany their diminution in favour of a new local government in the Drayton Valley area. It might also be noted however that I.D. 14, in its submission, suggests that its relatively low municipal tax rate is a function of that I.D.'s comparatively late start in accelerating the raising of service levels on a planned, fiscally responsible, basis. Certain service levels for minor functions were relatively low during the period studied. This reflects in part the discouraging effect of the relatively greater costs of evenly providing a good standard level of municipal services, over an extensive area, with many hamlets, in a comparatively short period of time.

Detailed actual tax levels for a range of representative properties in the study municipalities are presented later (Table 4-17, p. 4-54).

4.4.4. Balance Sheet Elements:

The asset base and make-up of the study municipalities may also be significant in conditioning the extent and seriousness of any effects or impacts associated with loss of any territory to a new local government in the Drayton Valley area. Circumstances appear to differ quite markedly in relation to these balance sheet factors, at least in per capita terms (Table 4-14).

Possibly because of its unusually high population base Parkland County tends to exhibit well below average asset levels on a per capita basis. Comparatively small reserves have been maintained in recent years, for both capital and, especially, operating purposes. Liquid and semi-liquid assets have also remained at well below average per capita levels.

By contrast Leduc County has been maintaining well above average levels of reserves, especially operating reserves, and possesses well-above average levels of more liquid assets, mainly in the category of 'investments loans and advances.' I.D. 14, and Clearwater M.D. (on the basis of its performance as I.D. 10) were in extremely healthy positions during the period studied, with committed reserves and liquid assets at levels considerably above the average in per capita terms. However, with particular regard to the high level of reserves, these need to be qualified for both the I.D. and M.D. On the capital side the reserves consist largely of as-yet-unspent Municipal Debt Reduction Grant monies received in 1979 (when the I.D. had little or no debt to apply the grant against - in common with many other rurals). The apparently high level of operating reserves is primarily due to a particular quirk of I.D. financing whereby it is necessary to maintain a specific operating reserve to cover the expenditures incurred prior to the collection and accrual of taxes, via the I.D. Trust Fund. If taxes could be collected earlier and more directly the operating reserve level would be reduced accordingly.

Wetaskiwin County appears to be situated closer to the average than any other study municipality in terms of total reserves and total liquid/semi-liquid assets. Most of the assets are in the form of capital reserves, or in the category of 'investments loans and advances.'

The Parkland County situation would appear to merit particular attention, especially since it would be liable to lose most to a new local government. The County does not appear to have much of the type of asset base that might provide a cushion against any particularly adverse effects or transitional expenses that might be experienced. (Parkland also exhibits comparatively high debenture debt levels.) The other study municipalities, with the possible exception of Wetaskiwin County, appear to be in much healthier positions, with good capacity to withstand the consequences of any loss of territory.

4.5. Net Cost Impacts:

The 'bottom-line' impact of a loss of territory for the study municipalities is the extent and direction of change in the net costs of operating the municipality. The net function costs have to be met from a combination of general revenues and general municipal taxation. The rate of general (unfunctionalized) revenue-raising is relatively constant across any given municipality, and is not considered to be significantly susceptible to change in a diminution situation. This leaves the general municipal taxation rate as the most relevant and meaningful 'bottom-line' measure of the effect of any diminution.

For the purposes of this report a short-form method of estimating net cost changes has been employed. The approach adopted focuses on two main groupings of financial activity: a) transportation/public works function; b) all other functions. The former grouping (Functions 31 and 32) generally accounts for over two-thirds of a rural municipality's budget, and is best treated in terms of per kilometre statistics with allowances for road density differences across the municipality. In the case of the latter grouping per capita statistics or general percentage reduction factors are more appropriate when making estimates of the financial adjustments consequent upon diminution. Expenditures, revenues and net costs for the diminished unit have been estimated, based on the actual 1984 situation, and guided by the percentage diminution factors presented in Table 4-1. The key assumptions for each municipality are indicated in the notes accompanying Table 4-15.

The net municipal tax amount required to balance the reconstructed financial statement is the residual obtained by summing function net costs and any allowance for a surplus, and then deducting non-tax general municipal revenues. The equalized mill rate is derived using the relevant total equalized assessment figure (Table 4-2), with the same figure being used in conjunction with total function expenditures to obtain a measure of expenditure effort. The comparative expenditure level and net cost reductions are presented in Table 4-15. Certain percentage reductions from Table 4-1 have also been incorporated.

The assumptions used in obtaining the estimates reflect certain basic expectations. In the case of transportation finances for the three counties it has been considered that the study areas account for significantly lower rates of expenditure and revenue per kilometre of road maintained. This is based on the contrasting population and road densitites between the much more developed eastern areas around the three county seats and the much sparser densities in the west ends of each county (see Table 3-3). The contrast is considered to be particularly great in the case of Parkland, somewhat less so for Leduc County, and least so for Wetaskiwin County; hence the variable factoring of the rate reductions indicated in the notes. The main implication of this line of reasoning is that a certain percentage reduction in road inventory will entail a lower percentage reduction in the transportation/public works costs. This is brought out in Table 4-16 by a comparison of the first two columns.

For all other functions a contrasting expectation has been applied, namely, a belief that the western ends of each county account for a disproportionately higher level of expenses, and a lower level of function revenues, than is applicable for the county as a whole. The population percentage has been used as the basis for the slight variances. These appear justified because of the likelihood of additional unit costs associated with supplying services to relatively remote and sparsely populated areas, where there is no real scope for taking advantage of economies of scale, or for realising significant user charge revenues. As a consequence of this line of reasoning the percentage reduction in 'other function' expenditures tends to be greater than the reduction in population. However, because of the much greater importance of the transportation/public works function the percentage reductions in 'all function' expenditures, and net function costs, tend to be somewhat less than the percentage reductions in either population or road inventory.

That the diminution would basically 'cost' rather than 'benefit' each existing municipality is indicated by the pattern of equalized assessment reductions being greater than the reductions in expenses or net costs (Table 4-15). This pattern is elaborated in Table 4-16, in terms of the percentage change in equalized mill rates. For the most part however diminution would appear to involve fairly small increases in the mill rate. There is even the indication of a slight decrease for Leduc County in the case of the 'lesser' scenario. The most notable increase is for I.D. 14, in relation to the 'intermediate' scenario (23.4%), but the rate indicated for the diminished I.D. (21.1) remains well below the rates indicated for all the other municipalities (except Clearwater M.D.).

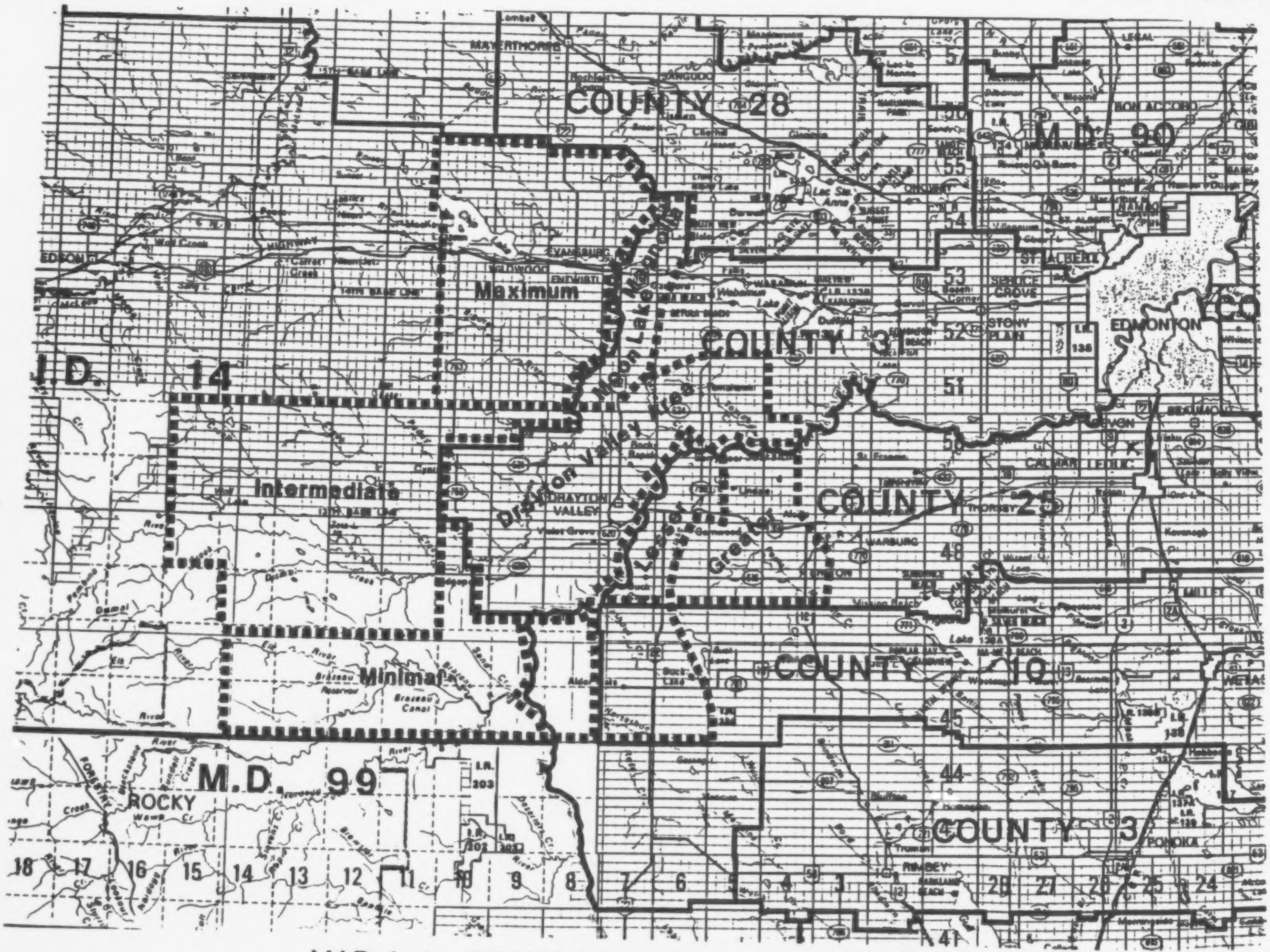
Also, despite the indicated increases all the study municipalities, except for Leduc County, would remain significantly below the average rate indicated for the 10 rural municipalities sampled.

The high Leduc County rate cannot be readily explained without closer investigation. It may reflect particularly high servicing efforts, in certain parts of the county at least. Assuming the tax dollars are being spent efficiently and equitably the residents of the west end of that county should be able to easily observe where they are being better served than their neighbours in Parkland or Wetaskiwin Counties. There is also the prospect that the rate will fall significantly once the Genesee power plant is part of the county's tax base, assuming little of the existing assessment base is lost through annexation attempts by the City of Leduc. Considered overall it appears that the residents of the west end of Leduc County face a particularly difficult time evaluating whether or not to seek to become part of any new local government that might be established in the nearby Drayton Valley area.

Whereas the current Leduc County equalized mill rate appears to be unusually high the I.D. 14 rate is obviously unusually low. The I.D. has benefitted over the past few years from the combination of a much increased assessment base and the continued provincial government subsidies, in relation to the administration and transportation functions, that flow from I.D. status. Once incorporated it is expected that tax rates will move upwards closer to, but still probably well below, the average.

A diminution in the municipalities studied will also result in increased expenditure efforts being necessary if existing service levels are to be maintained (Table 4-16). However, the higher levels will still fall significantly short of the expenditure effort being made by the average rural municipality. In a sense there will remain the likelihood that assessment is being 'wasted,' in comparative terms, to a certain extent. Regardless, it appears that any study municipality diminished by the creation of a new local government will have considerable capacity remaining to readily absorb any increased expenditures, even with a reduction in assessment base.

Detailed actual tax levels for a range of comparable representative properties in the study municipalities are presented in Table 4-17. These tax levels have been calculated on the basis of the average 1985 representative residential mill rates reported to the Assessment Equalization Board. The presentation deals with five types of farmland property and two types of residential property, and details school tax and municipal tax components as well as the total tax bill. (Any residual amounts - usually minor - are due to Hospital District requisitions or other special tax levies.) The properties used are not absolutely identical but are considered to be similar enough to facilitate reasonable comparisons. The taxes data provide a more useful reference point for individual taxpayers when considering some of the projected percentage changes indicated later in the report.


COUNTY 28
M.D. 90
COUNTY 31
COUNTY 25
COUNTY 10
COUNTY 3
I.D. 14
M.D. 99
Maximum
Intermediate
Minimal
Drayton Valley Area
Moon Lake
Lesser
Greater
DRAYTON VALLEY
EDMONTON
ST. ALBERT
SPRUCE GROVE
STONY PLAIN
EVANSBURG
MAYERTHORPE
EDSON
CALMAR
LEDUC
WARBURG
THORSBY
PONOKA
RIMBEY
ROCKY
BON ACCORD
ONOWAY
57
55
54
53
52
51
50
48
45
44
41
18
17
16
15
14
13
12
11
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
28
27
26
25
24

MAP 4-1 DRAYTON VALLEY AREA MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

ADJUSTED STUDY AREAS

TABLE 4-1 Diminution Generalities: Refined Estimates[1]
(Potential percentage reductions)

	Population	Area	Secondary/ Local Roads	Total Eq. Assessment	Industrial (S.F.P. Eq.) Assessment	Pipe-/ Power-line (Eq.) Assessment
Parkland County:[2]	16.5	40.0	27.5	20.0	27.5	27.5
Leduc County:						
Lesser area:	5.0	9.0	6.0	7.5	9.5	17.5
Greater area:	14.5	23.5	18.0	19.0	24.0	43.0
Wetaskiwin County:	10.0	14.0	9.5	12.5	19.0	26.5
Clearwater M.D.:	0.0	1.5	0.0	2.5	3.0	5.0
I.D. 14:						
Minimal area:	0.3	5.0	2.0	7.5	9.5	11.0
Intermediate area:	0.3	11.5	2.3	21.0	25.5	30.5
Maximum area:	25.0	18.0	25.0	29.0	30.0	35.0
Parkland County: (D.V. Area + Moon Lake-Magnolia)	18.5	51.0	32.0	21.0	28.5	28.0

Notes:

1. Estimates derived from 1984 data presented for the original study areas arrangement (see Tables 3-1 to 3-5). Refined estimates based on adjusted areas indicated on Map 4-1.
2. Drayton Valley Area only (i.e. excluding Moon Lake-Magnolia).

TABLE 4-2 Comparative Diminution Effects (in Absolute terms) (1984)

	Population	Area (ha.)	Sec./Loc. Roads (kms)	Total Eq. Assessment ($)	Industrial (S.F.P. Eq.) Ass. ($)	Pipe-& Power-line (Eq.) Assessment ($)
Parkland County:	Before 23,950	373,721	2570	373,701,830	241,998,840	186,612,950
D.V. Area only:	After 19,998	224,233	1863	298,961,464	175,449,159	135,294,389
Moon Lake-Magnolia:	After 19,565	184,605	1751	295,423,432	173,388,305	134,247,444
Leduc County:	Before 13,296	352,400	2896	177,546,540	120,070,770	52,108,190
Lesser:	After 12,631	320,684	2679	164,230,550	109,864,755	42,989,257
Greater:	After 11,368	269,586	2375	143,812,697	91,253,785	29,701,668
Wetaskiwin County:	Before 9,026	337,912	2301	94,160,940	51,560,150	22,322,190
	After 8,123	290,604	2082	82,390,823	41,763,722	16,406,810
Clearwater M.D.:	Before 9,201	1,865,937	2453	188,511,190	162,760,660	81,869,480
	After 9,193	1,837,187	2453	183,717,606	157,995,614	77,718,101
I.D. 14:	Before 8,119	2,649,301	2341[1]	175,145,370	142,819,090	73,713,320
Minimal:	After 8,090	2,516,834	2294	162,009,467	129,251,276	65,604,855
Intermediate:	After 8,090	2,340,827	2288	138,611,309	106,469,323	51,261,349
Maximum:	After 6,089	2,172,427	1756	124,353,321	99,973,363	47,913,658
5 Counties Average:	4,229	368,804	2385	46,973,582	18,750,836	11,106,802
5 M.D.'s Average:	4,455	352,442	1871	45,002,658	19,933,026	8,019,678
10 Rural Municips. Average:	4,342	360,623	2128	45,988,120	19,341,931	9,563,240

Note: 1 Includes 732 km of 'local forestry' road, maintained by Alberta Transportation, for the Forest Service mainly.

Sources: Tables 3-1 and 4-1 and 5-1.

TABLE 4-3 Comparative Fiscal Capacity Shifts
(based on refined estimates) (1984)

		Eq. Ass. $ per capita	Eq. Ass. $ per hectare	Eq. Ass. $ per km. roads	S.F.P. Eq. Ass. $ per capita	S.F.P. Eq. Ass. as % of Total Eq. Ass.
Parkland County:	Existing	15,603	99,995	145,409	10,104	64.8
i) D.V. Area Only:	Diminished	14,950	133,326	160,473	8,773	58.7
ii) including MoonL-Magnolia:	Diminished	15,100	160,030	168,717	8,862	58.7
Leduc County:	Existing	13,353	50,382	61,308	9,031	67.6
i) Lesser:	Diminished	13,002	51,213	61,302	8,698	66.9
ii) Greater	Diminished	12,651	53,348	60,553	8,027	63.5
Wetaskiwin County:	Existing	10,432	27,866	40,922	5,712	54.8
	Diminished	10,143	28,352	39,573	5,141	50.7
Clearwater M.D.:	Existing	20,488	10,103	76,849	17,689	86.3
	Diminished	19,985	10,000	74,895	17,187	86.0
I.D. 14:	Existing	21,572	6,611	74,816[1]	17,591	81.5
i) Minimal:	Diminished	20,026	6,437	70,623[1]	15,977	79.8
ii) Intermediate:	Diminished	17,134	5,921	60,582[1]	13,161	76.8
iii) Maximum:	Diminished	20,423	5,724	70,816[1]	16,419	80.4
5 Counties Average:		11,106	12,700	19,692	4,433	39.9
5 M.D.'s Average:		10,101	12,800	24,050	4,474	44.3
10 R.M.'s Average:		10,591	12,800	21,608	4,454	42.1

Note: 1 These fiscal capacities are understated by the inclusion of 'local forestry' roads, which are not usually a municipal responsibility in an incorporated rural municipality situation.

Source: Calculations based on Table 4-2 data.

TABLE 4-4: FISCAL CAPACITY TRENDS: 1981-1984
(per capita and per kilom. of open roads)

	PER CAPITA EQUALIZED ASSESSMENT				
	1981	1982	1983	1984	1981-84 avg.
Parkland County 31	13,504	14,474	15,836	15,645	14,885
Leduc County 25	10,504	11,711	13,302	13,353	12,280
Wetaskiwin County 10	7,440	9,016	9,387	10,432	9,095
Clearwater MD 99	12,524	15,470	19,018	20,488	16,875
Imp. Distr. 14	11,768	14,095	17,870	21,572	16,162
5 MD Average	7,226	8,868	9,704	10,102	8,979
5 County Average	7,110	9,247	9,712	11,107	9,280
10 Rural Average	7,169	9,053	9,708	10,591	9,126

	PER KM OF ROADS EQUALIZED ASSESSMENT				
	1981	1982	1983	1984	1981-84 avg.
Parkland County 31	120,358	133,005	145,581	145,798	136,264
Leduc County 25	41,693	53,798	61,074	61,308	54,488
Wetaskiwin County 10	27,727	33,587	36,820	40,922	34,788
Clearwater MD 99	50,432	61,117	71,334	76,849	65,239
Imp. Distr. 14 [1]	44,810	53,343	70,519	74,816	60,650
5 MD Average	17,103	21,029	23,097	24,050	21,324
5 County Average	13,000	16,409	17,219	19,692	16,584
10 Rural Average	14,805	18,439	19,803	21,608	18,668

Note: 1 Road kilometerage used includes 'local forestry' roads which leads to an under-statement of fiscal capacity in relation to incorporated rurals.

TABLE 4-5: RECENT CHANGES IN EQUALIZED ASSESSMENT

	Total Eq. Assess.	Machinery and Equipment Eq. Assess.
	1984-85 Percentage Change	1984-85 Percentage Change
Parkland County	- 4.7	-25.6
Leduc County	- 6.9	-23.3
Wetaskiwin County	-14.4	-15.4
Clearwater M.D.	-11.9	-18.3
I.D. 14	+ 9.5	+39.3
5 M.D.'s Average	+ 1.9	-15.8
5 Counties Average	+ 3.6	- 2.5
10 Rural Mun. Average	+ 2.8	-11.6

TABLE 4-6 EXPENDITURE EFFORT (OPERATING EXPENDITURES PER $1000 OF EQ. ASS.)

	1981		1982		1983		1984		1981-84 Average	
	Gross	Net	Gross	Net	Gross	Net	Gross	Net	Gross	Net
Parkland County	52.8	38.8	48.7	33.5	43.4	30.0	44.3	30.8	47.3	33.3
Leduc County	80.4	47.4	73.7	42.0	77.7	40.4	71.0	40.1	75.7	42.5
Wetaskiwin County	89.5	42.0	64.3	51.2	66.6	43.7	53.5	39.4	68.5	44.1
Clearwater M.D.	41.3	32.7	40.9	38.6	27.9	18.8	23.5	11.2	33.4	25.3
I.D. 14	53.2	36.4	31.7	28.4	24.5	18.5	25.2	22.1	33.7	26.4
5 M.D. Average	108.6	60.3	112.2	52.3	89.3	48.9	87.7	49.8	98.3	52.3
5 County Average	133.7	74.0	129.5	69.6	118.5	62.9	103.1	58.7	119.6	65.5
10 Rural Municip. Average	120.9	67.0	120.8	60.9	103.5	55.7	95.6	54.3	108.9	58.8

Page 1 of 4

TABLE 4-7 MUNICIPAL FUNCTIONS: GROSS/NET OPERATING EXPENDITURES

(Per Capita and Percentage Breakdowns; 1981-84 Average Statistics)

	TOTAL EXPENDITURES				F.12 General Admin.				F.21 Police Services			
	Gross		Net		Gross		Net		Gross		Net	
	$ p.c.	%	$ p.c.	%	$ p.c.	%	$ p.c.	%	$ p.c.	%	$ p.c.	%
Parkland County	699	(100)	491	(100)	75.9	(10.9)	54.5	(11.1)	29.7	(4.3)	19.3	(3.9)
Leduc County	925	(100)	516	(100)	80.2	(8.7)	67.0	(13.0)	0.1	(0.0)	0.1	(0.0)
Wetaskiwin County	607	(100)	397	(100)	69.3	(11.4)	58.2	(14.7)	4.0	(0.7)	4.0	(1.0)
Clearwater M.D.	540	(100)	398	(100)	28.7	(5.3)	24.8	(6.2)	0.0	(0.0)	0.0	(0.0)
I.D. 14	513	(100)	407	(100)	50.9	(9.9)	36.1	(8.9)	0.0	(0.0)	0.0	(0.0)
5 M.D. Average	881	(100)	457	(100)	100.6	(11.4)	82.1	(17.9)	0.0	(0.0)	0.0	(0.0)
5 County Average	1101	(100)	594	(100)	142.1	(12.9)	109.3	(18.4)	0.0	(0.0)	0.0	(0.0)
10 Rural Mun. Average	989	(100)	524	(100)	120.9	(12.2)	95.4	(18.2)	0.0	(0.0)	0.0	(0.0)

TABLE 4-7 MUNICIPAL FUNCTIONS: GROSS/NET OPERATING EXPENDITURES

(Per Capita and Percentage Breakdowns; 1981-84 Average Statistics)

	F.23 Fire Protection				F.25 Ambulance				F.31/32 Transp./Public Works			
	Gross		Net		Gross		Net		Gross		Net	
	$ p.c.	%	$ p.c.	%	$ p.c.	%	$ p.c.	%	$ p.c.	%	$ p.c.	%
Parkland County	12.1	(1.7)	9.9	(2.0)	6.6	(0.9)	6.6	(1.3)	475.5	(68.0)	359.3	(73.2)
Leduc County	13.9	(1.5)	13.4	(2.6)	2.2	(0.2)	2.2	(0.4)	622.5	(67.3)	373.3	(72.3)
Wetaskiwin County	4.2	(0.7)	4.1	(1.0)	0.8	(0.1)	0.8	(0.2)	433.1	(71.4)	272.6	(68.7)
Clearwater M.D.	8.3	(1.5)	5.2	(1.3)	3.3	(0.6)	3.3	(0.8)	333.8	(61.8)	297.5	(74.7)
I.D. 14	33.6	(6.6)	33.6)	(8.3)	4.1	(0.8)	4.1	(1.0)	230.3	(44.9)	225.2	(55.4)
5 M.D. Average	14.6	(1.7)	12.9	(2.8)	2.5	(0.3)	2.5	(0.5)	607.2	(68.9)	303.5	(66.4)
5 County Average	5.6	(0.5)	3.4	(0.6)	4.0	(0.4)	0.3	(0.1)	682.9	(62.0)	383.4	(64.5)
10 Rural Mun. Average	10.1	(1.0)	8.2	(1.6)	3.2	(0.3)	1.4	(0.3)	644.3	(65.2)	342.6	(65.3)

Page 3 of 4

TABLE 4-7 MUNICIPAL FUNCTIONS: GROSS/NET OPERATING EXPENDITURES

(Per Capita and Percentage Breakdowns; 1981-84 Average Statistics)

	F.41 Water Systems				F.43 Garbage Coll./Disp.				F.51-56 Social Services			
	Gross		Net		Gross		Net		Gross		Net	
	$ p.c.	%	$ p.c.	%	$ p.c.	%	$ p.c.	%	$ p.c.	%	$ p.c.	%
Parkland County	10.7	(1.5)	1.9	(0.4)	4.7	(0.7)	4.2	(0.9)	0.9	(0.1)	0.9	(0.2)
Leduc County	45.9	(5.0)	0.0	(0.0)	8.3	(0.9)	7.5	(1.5)	18.0	(1.9)	3.4	(0.7)
Wetaskiwin County	0.0	(0.0)	0.0	(0.0)	7.7	(1.2)	7.6	(1.9)	3.7	(0.6)	0.5	(0.1)
Clearwater M.D.	0.0	(0.0)	-7.2	(-1.8)	7.1	(1.3)	7.0	(1.8)	1.0	(0.2)	1.0	(0.3)
I.D. 14	12.2	(2.4)	5.7	(1.4)	1.7	(0.3)	1.7	(0.4)	2.5	(0.5)	2.5	(0.6)
5 M.D. Average	0.0	(0.0)	0.0	(0.0)	3.9	(0.4)	3.4	(0.7)	7.3	(0.8)	0.9	(0.2)
5 County Average	0.0	(0.0)	0.0	(0.0)	10.6	(1.0)	4.8	(0.8)	7.7	(0.7)	1.4	(0.2)
10 Rural Mun. Average	0.0	(0.0)	0.0	(0.0)	7.2	(0.7)	4.1	(0.8)	7.5	(0.8)	1.1	(0.2)

Page 4 of 4

TABLE 4-7 MUNICIPAL FUNCTIONS: GROSS/NET OPERATING EXPENDITURES

(Per Capita and Percentage Breakdowns; 1981-84 Average Statistics)

	F.61 Municipal Planning				F.62 Agricultural Services				F.71-74 Recreation/Culture			
	Gross		Net		Gross		Net		Gross		Net	
	$ p.c.	%	$ p.c.	%	$ p.c.	%	$ p.c.	%	$ p.c.	%	$ p.c.	%
Parkland County	10.4	(1.5)	6.4	(1.4)	19.5	(2.8)	6.0	(1.2)	48.3	(6.2)	13.6	(2.8)
Leduc County	0.0	(0.0)	0.0	(0.0)	18.3	(2.0)	9.1	(1.8)	47.8	(5.2)	25.5	(4.9)
Wetaskiwin County	3.4	(0.6)	0.0	(0.0)	34.4	(5.7	17.2	(4.3)	21.8	(3.6)	15.9	(4.0)
Clearwater M.D.	1.8	(0.3)	1.7	(0.5)	14.4	(2.7)	7.6	(1.9)	41.9	(7.8)	23.3	(5.8)
I.D. 14	4.4	(0.9)	4.2	(1.1)	12.6	(2.5)	4.9	(1.2)	67.7	(13.2)	43.8	(10.8)
5 M.D. Average	0.6	(0.1)	0.5	(0.1)	74.7	(8.5)	16.6	(3.6)	28.4	(3.2)	12.0	(2.6)
5 County Average	0.8	(0.1)	0.6	(0.1)	89.1	(8.1)	20.9	(3.5)	17.5	(1.6)	6.5	(1.1)
10 Rural Mun. Average	0.7	(0.1)	0.5	(0.1)	81.8	(8.3)	18.7	(3.6)	23.1	(2.3)	9.3	(1.8)

TABLE 4-8: ROAD INVENTORY BREAKDOWN BY SURFACE TYPE (March 1984)
(kms. of open, non-forestry,[1] secondary and local roads)

	Paved	Oiled	Gravelled	Graded	TOTAL
Parkland County	195.0 (7.6%)	267.0 (10.4%)	2,082.0 (81.0%)	26.0 (1.0%)	2,570.0 (100%)
Leduc County	113.4 (3.9%)	249.6 (8.6%)	2,493.1 (86.1%)	40.0 (1.4%)	2,896.1 (100%)
Wetaskiwin County	97.4 (4.2%)	113.5 (4.9%)	1,947.2 (84.6%)	143.2 (6.2%)	2,301.3 (100%)
Clearwater M.D.	136.1 (7.8%)	- (0.0%)	1,534.4 (88.2%)	68.2 (3.9%)	1,738.7 (100%)
I.D. 14[1]	32.0 (2.0%)	43.0 (2.7%)	1,476.0 (91.8%)	56.0 (3.5%)	1,607.0[1] (100%)
5 M.D. Average	87.7 (4.7%)	153.3 (8.2%)	1,374.5 (73.5%)	255.7 (13.7%)	1,871.2 (100%)
5 County Average	50.5 (2.1%)	157.5 (6.6%)	1,924.8 (80.7%)	252.6 (10.6%)	2,385.4 (100%)
10 R.M. Average	69.1 (3.2%)	155.4 (7.3%)	1,649.7 (77.5%)	254.2 (11.9%)	2,128.3 (100%)

[1] The exclusion of local 'forestry' roads mainly impacts I.D. 14.

TABLE 4-9 TRANSP./PUBLIC WORKS OPERATING FINANCES PER KILOMETER

(AND NET COSTS PER $1000 OF EQ. ASSESSMENT: I.E. EXPENDITURE EFFORT)

	1981			1982			1983			1984			1981-84 Average		
	Expend.	Rev.	Net	Expend.	Rev.	Net	Expend.	Rev.	Net	Expend.	Rev.	Net	Expend.	Rev.	Net
	($ per km)			($ per km)			($ per km)			($ per km)			($ per km)		
Parkland County	4532	892	3640 (30.2)	4662	1094	3568 (26.8)	4274	1322	2952 (20.3)	3947	943	3004 (20.6)	4534	1245	3289 (24.5)
Leduc County	2384	880	1504 (36.1)	2554	919	1635 (30.4)	3376	1629	1747 (28.6)	2731	992	1739 (28.4)	2761	1105	1656 (30.9)
Wetaskiwin County	1901	966	935 (33.7)	1529	536	993 (29.6)	1729	603	1126 (30.6)	1468	352	1116 (27.3)	1657	614	1043 (30.3)
Clearwater M.D.	900	7	893 (17.7)	1422	7	1415 (23.2)	1528	530	998 (14.0)	1292	0	1292 (16.8)	1286	136	1150 (17.9)
I.D. 14[1]	812	6	806 (18.0)	717	6	711 (13.3)	1026	57	969 (13.7)	1100	78	1022 (12.1)	911	36	875 (14.3)
5 M.D. Average	1310	572	738 (43.2)	1712	963	749 (35.6)	1306	629	677 (29.3)	1403	568	835 (34.7)	1442	721	721 (33.8)
5 County Average	1119	475	644 (49.6)	1261	545	716 (43.7)	1283	588	695 (40.4)	1222	472	750 (32.2)	1220	535	685 (41.3)
10 Rural Mun. Average	1203	517	686 (46.3)	1459	728	731 (39.6)	1293	606	687 (34.7)	1302	514	723 (33.4)	1318	617	701 (37.5)

Note: Net costs per $1000 Eq. Ass. is shown in parentheses. i.e. Net Function Expenditure Effort.

[1] Kilometerage recognized includes 'local forestry' roads (approx. 730 kms).

TABLE 4-10 ALL FUNCTIONS COST RECOVERY RATES

(Total Function Operating Revenue as a Percentage of Total Function Operating Expenditures)

	1981	1982	1983	1984	1981-84 Average
Parkland County	26.7	31.2	33.3	30.4	30.4
Leduc County	41.0	43.0	48.0	43.6	43.9
Wetaskiwin County	42.8	33.8	34.4	26.3	34.3
Clearwater M.D.[1]	20.8	5.5	32.6	52.4	27.8
I.D. 14[1]	31.5	10.5	24.7	12.3	19.8
5 M.D. Average	44.5	53.4	45.3	41.4	45.1
5 Counties Average	44.7	46.2	46.9	42.6	44.6
10 Rural Mun. Average	44.5	49.5	46.2	42.1	44.8

Note: 1 Both municipalities did not receive a Rural Road Grant from the Province during the years studied, in contrast to the incorporated municipalities.

TABLE 4-11: OPERATING REVENUES (1981-84 Average Data)

	Grand Total Operating Revenues	General Revenues		Function Revenues	
	($ p.c.)	$ p.c.	% of total	$ p.c.	% of total
Parkland County	725	517	(71.3)	208	(28.7)
Leduc County	952	543	(57.0)	409	(43.0)
Wetaskiwin County	593	383	(64.6)	210	(35.4)
Clearwater M.D.[1]	613	471	(76.8)	142	(23.2)
I.D. 14[1]	548	442	(80.7)	106	(19.3)
5 M.D. Average	917	503	(54.9)	414	(45.1)
5 County Average	1129	627	(55.5)	503	(44.6)
10 Rural Mun. Average	1021	564	(55.2)	457	(44.8)

Note: 1 Both municipalities did not receive a Rural Road Grant from the Province during the years studied, in contrast to the incorporated municipalities. This explains the particularly low function revenue levels.

TABLE 4-12: GENERAL REVENUES BREAKDOWN (1981-84 Average Data)

	Unconditional Grants			Municipal Taxation			Other Own-Source		
	$ p.c.	as a % of total revs.	as a % of general revs.	$ p.c.[1]	as a % of total revs.	as a % of general revs.	$ p.c.	as a % of total revs.	as a % of general revs.
Parkland County	38.15	5.26	7.38	406.27	56.01	78.57	72.63	10.01	14.05
Leduc County	42.37	4.45	7.80	466.57	49.00	85.91	34.18	3.59	6.29
Wetaskiwin County	79.45	13.41	20.75	246.52	41.60	64.39	56.90	9.60	14.86
Clearwater M.D.	35.32	5.76	7.50	328.33	53.55	69.71	107.33	17.51	22.79
I.D. 14	43.48	7.93	9.83	298.07	54.40	67.43	100.51	18.34	22.74
5 M.D. Average	131.41	14.34	26.13	310.95	33.93	61.83	60.57	6.61	12.04
5 County Average	151.72	13.43	24.21	409.19	36.23	65.29	65.80	5.83	10.50
10 Rural Mun. Av.	141.35	13.85	25.08	359.05	35.18	63.71	63.13	6.18	11.20

Note: 1 The per capita municipal taxation statistic has limited value when municipalities with widely varying proportions of industrial assessment are being compared. For example, the 5 Counties sampled have less than half the proportion of industrial assessment (as measured by S.F.F. Eq. Ass.) exhibited by I.D. 14 and then I.D. 10.

TABLE 4-13: EQUALIZED MILL RATES (1981-84 Average Data)

	Total Property Taxation	Total Requisitions	Total Municipal Taxation	Total Supplem. School Requisitions
Parkland County	58.1	31.8	26.3	20.9
Leduc County	67.3	31.8	35.4	21.0
Wetaskiwin County	55.1	29.3	25.7	19.7
Clearwater M.D.	46.0	27.5	18.5	13.9
I.D. 14	42.3	33.4	17.0	21.2
5 M.D. Average	64.2	32.3	32.0	24.0
5 County Average	73.9	32.6	41.3	25.2
10 Rural Mun. Average	69.0	32.4	36.6	24.6

TABLE 4-14: BALANCE SHEET ELEMENTS (1981-84 Average Data)

	Liquid & Semi Liquid Assets			Reserves			Debenture Debt		
	Cash	Investments	Total	Operating	Capital	Total	Water & Sewer	Other Debt	Total Debt
		($ p.c.)			($ p.c.)			($ p.c.)	
Parkland County	67.17	58.98	126.14	7.71	80.95	88.66	57.01	347.59	404.60
Leduc County	1.94	627.28	629.22	676.48	94.29	770.77	105.81	71.72	177.53
Wetaskiwin County	7.55	263.14	270.69	63.15	253.55	316.69	1.89	0	1.89
Clearwater M.D.	1156.92	6.28	1163.19	530.29	390.19	920.48	14.50	0	14.50
I.D. 14	1197.56	3.73	1201.29	542.43	296.69	839.12	61.87	0	61.87
5 M.D. Average	44.78	201.56	246.34	90.72	93.41	184.13	42.16	1.41	43.56
5 County Average	163.74	367.44	531.18	332.83	247.47	580.30	21.90	154.84	176.73
10 Rural Mun. Av.	103.03	282.77	385.80	209.26	168.84	378.10	32.24	76.53	108.76

TABLE 4-15 Comparative Expenditure Level and Net Cost Reductions (1984) (Percentage Change)

	Transportation Function Expendits.	(Sec./Loc. Roads)	Other Function Expendits.	(Population)	All Function Expenditures	Net Function Costs	(Total Equalized Assessment)
Parkland County:[1]	-10.5	(-27.5)	-20.0	(-16.5)	-14.2	-14.8	(-20.0)
Leduc County:							
Lesser area:	- 4.2	(-6.0)	- 6.0	(- 5.0)	- 4.7	- 4.6	(- 7.5)
Greater area:	-10.0	(-18.0)	-16.0	(-14.5)	-11.7	-11.3	(-19.0)
Wetaskiwin County:	- 8.0	(- 9.5)	-12.0	(-10.0)	- 9.5	- 9.4	(-12.5)
I.D. 14:							
Minimal area:	- 0.03	(- 2.0)	0	(- 0.3)	- 0.01	- 0.02	(- 7.5)
Intermediate area:	- 0.03	(- 2.3)	0	(- 0.3)	- 0.01	- 0.02	(-21.0)
Maximum area:	-28.8	(-25.0)	-25.0	(-25.0)	-26.8	-25.5	(-29.0)
Clearwater M.D.:	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	0	(- 2.5)

1. Drayton Valley Area only (no calculations for the additional removal of Moon Lake-Magnolia).

NOTES:

	Transportation/Public Works	All Other Functions	Non-tax General Revenues (and allowance for surplus)
Parkland County:	D.V. area accounts for roughly one-third of per km. rates for the county as a whole, i.e. 707 kms. at $1500 expenditures per km., and $350 revenues per km. (see Table 4-12).	D.V. area responsible for 20% of expenses; and 15% of revenues (slight variance on population percentage, 16.5%).	D.V. area accounts for 16.5% of these items (i.e. same as population) (see Table 4-1).
Leduc County:	West end accounts for roughly one-half of per km. rates for the county as a whole, i.e. 217 kms. (lesser) or 521 kms. (greater) at $1350 expenditures per km. and $550 revenues per km. (Table 4-12).	West end responsible for: 6% of expenses, 4% of revenues (lesser); 16% of expenses, 13% of revenues (greater). N.B.: Functions 41 and 42 finances (water and sewer) have been discounted.	West end accounts for 5% (lesser); 14.5% (greater) (see Table 4-1).
Wetaskiwin County:	Alder Flats/Buck Lake area accounts for roughly three-quarters of the per km. rates for the county as a whole, i.e. 219 kms. at $1250 expenditures per km., and $450 km. revenues per km. (Table 4-12).	Alder Flats/Buck Lake area responsible for: 12% of expenses, 8% of revenues (slight variances on population percentage; 10%).	Alder Flats/Buck Lake area accounts for 10% (same as population) (Table 4-1).
Clearwater M.D.:	No change: no local roads in Rose Creek area.	No change: negligible population in Rose Creek area.	No change.
Improvement District No. 14:	Study areas account for expenditures of $1000 per km. (no revenues). Kilometerage: Minimal - 47 km.; Intermediate - 53 km.; Maximum - 613 km.	No change for 'minimal' and 'intermediate' scenarios because of negligible population. 'Maximum' scenario: 25% expenses; 25% revenues.	No change for 'minimal' and 'intermediate' scenarios; 25% diminution factor for 'maximum' scenario.

TABLE 4-16 Comparative Equalized Mill Rates and Expenditure Effort (1984)

	Equalized Mill Rate (Net taxes for general municipal purposes)			Expenditure Effort (Total Expenditures per $1000 Eq. Ass.)		
	Actual	Diminished	% Change	Actual	Diminished	% Change
Parkland County:[1]	28.3	30.2	+ 6.7	44.4	47.7	+ 7.4
Leduc County:						
Lesser area:	35.7	35.3	- 1.1	55.8	57.5	+ 3.0
Greater area:	35.7	37.7	+ 5.6	55.8	60.9	+ 9.1
Wetaskiwin County:	27.1	29.0	+ 7.0	53.5	55.3	+ 3.4
I.D. 14:						
Minimal area:	17.1	18.1	+ 5.5	25.2	26.8	+ 6.3
Intermediate area:	17.1	21.1	+23.4	25.2	31.3	+24.2
Maximum area:	17.1	18.0	+ 5.2	25.2	26.7	+ 6.0
Clearwater M.D.:	17.5	18.0	+ 2.6	23.5	24.1	+ 2.6
10 Rur. Mun. Average:	35.0	n.a.	n.a.	95.6	n.a.	n.a.

[1] Drayton Valley Area only removed (no calculations for the additional removal of Moon Lake-Magnolia).

TABLE 4-17: COMPARATIVE TAXES (1985): REPRESENTATIVE PROPERTIES

		Farmland (Quarter-Section)[2]					Residential[2]	
		56%(63ac) 62%(92ac) $	43%(131ac) 46%(27ac) $	Bush(32ac) 30%(124ac) $	25% (40ac) Bush(119ac) $	24% (15ac) Bush(144ac) $	House/ Garage (013Gy) $	House/ Garage (013C) $
PARKLAND COUNTY (West-end)	School	190	134	71	50	23	104	351
	Municipal	196	138	73	51	24	107	361
	TOTAL[1]	402	284	150	106	49	221	742
LEDUC COUNTY (West-end)	School	218	154	81	57	27	127	411
	Municipal	239	169	89	63	29	139	451
	TOTAL[1]	460	324	172	121	56	267	867
WETASKIWIN COUNTY (West-end)	School	179	126	67	47	22	129	337
	Municipal	209	147	78	55	26	151	394
	TOTAL[1]	424	299	159	112	52	306	799
CLEARWATER M.D.	School	122	91	50	34	14	69	240
	Municipal	218	162	90	60	25	123	428
	TOTAL[1]	350	261	144	97	41	198	687
I.D. 14	School	170	127	70	47	20	84	322
	Municipal	162	121	67	45	19	81	308
	TOTAL[1]	332	248	137	92	39	165	630

Notes: 1 The 'total' figure includes small Hospital District requisitions and/or other special municipal levies, which are not separately identified. The 'school' portion refers to the supplementary school requisition. The 'municipal' portion refers to the general tax levy.

2 The specific properties used as the basis for the comparisons were selected by regional assessment staff, Alberta Municipal Affairs.

Sources: The mill rates used are 'AVR Residential' as reported to the Assessment Equalization Board, and published in the Board's Mill Rates Report (October 1985).

5. A DRAYTON VALLEY AREA LOCAL GOVERNMENT:

5.1. Interest Groups:

A separate local government for the Drayton Valley area was last sought by area interests in the early 1970's, not long after Parkland County had been formed. At the time the petitioners were resident primarily in the south-west part of Parkland, around Drayton Valley, in what had been an improvement district until the county came along. A related group of petitioners from the west end of Leduc County were also actively seeking incorporation into a new Drayton Valley area county. Lesser interest in the same issue was expressed by some residents of the west end of Wetaskiwin County, north of Alder Flats/Buck Lake.

No petitions have been circulated recently, and no systematic public opinion polling has so far been conducted to determine the current situation. However, a lobby group was formed in May 1985 and has been actively selling memberships. So far around 1000 memberships have been sold over a fairly wide area, despite the lack of a public information study on the subject. The response appears to be similar in pattern to that evidenced for the earlier campaign.

5.1.1. Drayton Valley Area Parklanders:

The impetus for the present study, and the core area of interest, appears to lie with certain rural residents of Parkland County, living in the vicinity of the Town of Drayton Valley, who were also active in the previous, frustrated, campaign. Parkland's new local electoral division structure, and the addition of two divisions mainly serving the semi-urban eastern area, sparked fears that the southwest area of the County would become more politically marginal, in addition to already being remote from Stony Plain, in the overall county scheme of things. It is difficult to determine where, geographically speaking, such fears cease to be present or relevant.

It has been assumed that concern and interest is greatest within the area defined by the Drayton Valley senior high school attendance area (see Maps 2-4 and 4-1). To the east of this area the community orientation is primarily to Stony Plain, the county seat. To the north the focus is Lake Wabamun: the particular industries and recreational communities which it supports are in no way oriented to Drayton Valley, but relate instead eastwards into the Edmonton metropolitan area. To the north also the senior high school ties are with Seba Beach or Evansburg-Entwistle. There are some ties between these areas and Drayton Valley, most notably in relation to the hospital district and in terms of the toll-free calling relationship, but it is unlikely that Drayton Valley exerts a dominant influence into the Evansburg-Entwistle area.

The Yellowhead corridor confers much more of an east-west, rather than north-south, graining to community patterning in the Magnolia-Gainford area. The highway corridor is probably best seen as tangential to Drayton Valley's sphere of influence, and certainly not integral. It is conceivable however that some Parklanders from this area, viewing the prospect of a separate county conferring a much more semi-urban character on the diminished Parkland, might prefer to be incorporated into a more rural municipality. Their main options would be to join the new municipality or link up with I.D. 14.

5.1.2. Town of Drayton Valley:

The Town of Drayton Valley is also favourably disposed to the establishment of a separate local government not only for the south-west part of Parkland, but also into the southwest part of I.D. 14, where the town is the service centre for oil/gas activity, and across the North Saskatchewan River to encompass those parts of Leduc and even Wetaskiwin Counties whose residents make use of municipal services provided by the town. The town has frequently experienced difficulties and frustrations attempting to deal with up to four rural municipalities based in centres at a great distance from Drayton Valley (Stony Plain, Edson, Leduc and Wetaskiwin).

5.1.3. Leduc County West-Enders:

Across the North Saskatchewan River there is one particular part of Leduc County which already relates very strongly to Drayton Valley. This is basically the strip from Buck-Lake Creek westwards, where Drayton Valley is the dominant school centre (except where Lindale school exerts an influence). It is difficult to determine if Drayton Valley's influence is dominant beyond this creek, where the senior high school centre is Breton.

There is certainly some basis for considering the inclusion of part of Leduc County as far east as around Breton (e.g. district agriculturist's territory; toll-free calling relationships), but it is not clear if there would be a majority consensus of opinion within this area favourable to any change. The debate would probably centre on the possible fate of the senior high school in Breton, now operating at only half-capacity. Some might fear a temptation to centralize senior high schooling in Drayton Valley; while others might consider a new school authority, based in that centre, as a means of protecting and preserving the Breton school from possible replacement by a new centralized high school serving the Breton-Warburg-Thorsby areas. In fact neither scenario warrants serious consideration as long as there continues to be local support for the existing small - but good and valued - high school. In addition, the current school jurisdiction is actively planning to modernize all the schools in the west end of Leduc County, and any new school jurisdiction centred in Drayton Valley would need to be prepared to maintain and enhance any small high schools serving outlying communities, such as the Breton High School (see page 7-38).

To cope with the uncertainty in the case of Leduc County information has been generated for two possible scenarios. One scenario involves only the Buck-Lake Creek area westwards, with the other including this area and extending eastwards to just beyond Breton (based on the Breton senior high school attendance area) (see Map 4-1).

5.1.4. Wetaskiwin County West-Enders:

The Alder Flats/Buck Lake area of Wetaskiwin County has produced some interest in the past in being associated with a new Drayton Valley-based local government, but whether the current interest is significant enough to merit serious consideration is not at all clear. Whereas other interest areas are faced with an 'either/or' situation, i.e. either for or against being included, the west end of Wetaskiwin is in something of an 'either/or/or' situation. Allegiances could be torn in three directions: Rocky Mountain House (seat of the new Clearwater M.D.); the status quo represented by Wetaskiwin; or a possible new county around Drayton Valley. The area would remain on the outer periphery of either jurisdiction. Drayton Valley is probably the closest centre for most residents in time-distance terms, because of the paved highway access. Rocky Mountain House will be a more competitive centre once the current paving project is completed. Both centres are considerably closer than the present county seat in Wetaskiwin.

Drayton Valley ties into the Alder Flats/Buck Lake area includes a toll-free calling relationship, some informal D.A. servicing, and some oilfield-related interaction. Drayton Valley has been perceived by area residents as being primarily an oil-town, whereas Rocky Mountain House has been perceived to better encompass both the oilpatch and lumbering, raising a greater positive identification with the community to the south. However, as Drayton Valley further develops as a forest-industry centre, helped by the new strandboard mill, it too could develop a more positive identification in the minds of residents of the west end of Wetaskiwin County. Currently however, it is Rocky Mountain House which is believed to be the most popular centre.

A majority local consensus on change may also be difficult to obtain in this area, again because of schooling-related concerns. The high school at Alder Flats is a good one but it is a small high school, operating at a comparatively low capacity, and there will always be serious limitations on the range of programs it can offer. The school is vulnerable to replacement of its role by a new school located more centrally in the western half of the county. Several scenarios are currently being considered by the county school board, the most suitable and least unacceptable of which appears to be the construction of a new high school at Pendryl, roughly mid-way between the existing high school locations at Alder Flats and Winfield. As was speculated for the Breton area, a Drayton Valley-based school authority might be feared locally for its possible attraction to centralizing at least senior high schooling in the town, through replication of the situation which currently exists in the Tomahawk area. Such a development would probably entail the demise of one of the existing schools at either Alder Flats or Buck Lake in favour of one good-sized K-9 school. Whatever scenario unfolds some change appears inevitable and a significant degree of community anguish appears unavoidable.

It is not inconceivable that a new high school at Pendryl could be part of either the existing school jurisdiction or a new school jurisdiction, but the latter would imply a rural municipal boundary encompassing the existing Winfield high school attendance area (Map 2-4). It is highly unlikely that the Winfield area residents identify closely enough with Drayton Valley to wish for such a development, although it is believed that some Norbuck area residents of Wetaskiwin County do identify closely with Breton rather than Winfield.

It should be noted that for the purposes of this study the current Winfield school attendance area has been viewed as being unaffected by any change that may take place. Information has been generated only on the basis of the existing Alder Flats-Buck Lake school attendance area being the only portion of Wetaskiwin County that might be affected. It is suggested however that the west end of Wetaskiwin County only be seriously considered for inclusion if a majority of the current residents of the area petition accordingly.

5.1.5. Friends of Rose Creek: Clearwater M.D.:

If a portion of Wetaskiwin County was to be seriously considered for inclusion it is expected that the adjacent Rose Creek area of the M.D. of Clearwater would also be included. The area has recently been the subject of an unsuccessful annexation bid by Wetaskiwin County, which was strongly opposed by the M.D. The main interests to be respected in the case of this area, apart from the M.D., are the neighbouring county residents who have demonstrated a particular concern for the area (e.g. the Rose Creek Society), and oil-patch interests.

5.1.6. I.D. 14 interests:

The south-east part of Improvement District No. 14 is intimately tied to Drayton Valley on account of oilfield and gas plant servicing. The oil-patch interest appears to be paramount in this area as far as boundary determination is concerned. There is a particular concern in relation to the maintenance of the 'resource roads' serving this area and it would be incumbent upon any new local government to make a priority of improving the resource road situation.

Resident population within this part of I.D. 14 is extremely limited. There appear to be no school-age children at present, though there have been some in the past in connection with the Brazeau Reservoir development. This past activity seems to have influenced the special assignment of a portion of the I.D. around the Reservoir to Parkland County for school purposes (see Map 2-3).

While the oil-patch interest may appear paramount it needs to be noted that the area is also very important in assessment terms for I.D. 14, centred in Edson. This I.D. is presently hoping to incorporate, within its present boundaries, in the near future. It will be important to ensure that loss of territory to any new Drayton Valley-centred local government will not prevent a successful incorporation at a fair and reasonable rate of taxation. (The incorporation exercise would confer direct local government on 8000 residents who do not presently enjoy this privilege.) While it will be necessary to wait for completion of the future status study, now being undertaken for the I.D., before making a more definitive judgment, it is considered that neither of the three diminution scenarios outlined below would critically impede successful incorporation of I.D. 14 in the near future.

I.D. 14, in its submission, takes 'extreme exception' to the above statement (Appendices 1.1.2. and 1.1.3.) Yet, even for the 'worst-case', 'intermediate' diminution scenario, the I.D.'s fiscal capacity statistics are so much greater than the sample averages that it appears self-evident that the I.D. has a more than adequate ability to deliver services - even allowing for any unusual circumstances applying to I.D. 14, as noted at various points in the previous chapter (Table 4-3). This assessment is further encouraged by the knowledge that the I.D.'s assessment base has grown significantly since 1984, and by the belief that the fiscal capacity in road kilometerage terms - a key factor for rural municipalities - is under-stated significantly because of the large extent of 'local forestry' roads in the I.D.'s road inventory. (These are not normally a municipal responsibility for incorporated rural municipalities.) It is also the case that the I.D.'s municipal tax rates are very low in comparative terms, mainly because of the healthy assessment situation, and would remain so even if the 'worst-case' I.D. scenario materialised (Table 4-16).

The 'minimal' case scenario focusses on that part of I.D. 14 near Drayton Valley which is either tied to Parkland, or is unorganized, for school purposes (see Map 4-1). It creates minimum school system disruption, limiting impact on the Yellowhead School Division, but has the disadvantage of encompassing only a part of the oil-field and gas plant servicing activity centred in Drayton Valley. The 'intermediate' scenario is more appropriate from an oil-patch perspective, defining fairly well the division between Edson-based servicing, and the servicing out of Drayton Valley. The 'maximum' scenario adds in the Chip Lake area, the core of a former I.D., in the event that it may be deemed important to effect a greater balancing between the assessment loss experienced by I.D. 14 and the reduction in people-serving and road maintenance responsibilities. It is understood however that interests in this area are fairly strongly committed to the idea of being within an incorporated I.D. 14, rather than linking up with any other local government.

5.2. Forms of Government:

The desire for more localized local government in the Drayton Valley area has generally been couched in terms of a call for a 'County of Drayton Valley,' without too much elaboration on what exactly is sought. The available forms or combinations of local government for the area may be divided into three possible basic 'packages.'

1. Municipal District/Town/School Authority.
2. Traditional County/Town.
3. Unified, urban/rural, County.

The first package would see the affected rural areas being incorporated as a Municipal District, with the council being responsible only for municipal affairs, and not for school affairs. The latter could be handled through the M.D.'s support for, and participation in, one or several of the existing school authorities (i.e. the counties, and the Yellowhead School Division), or it could be covered by a new, parallel, school division carved from the same existing jurisdictions as the M.D. The Town of Drayton Valley would remain a separate municipality dealing with urban municipal affairs, and participating in whatever school authority existed for the general area.

The second package would involve a traditional county with one council being responsible for all rural municipal affairs, and a related county board of education being responsible for all school affairs in the general area. While the Town of Drayton Valley would be a supporter of the county school system under this package it would retain its separate identity and responsibility for urban municipal affairs.

A unified urban/rural county - the third package - is comparatively rare in Alberta, the only example being Strathcona County near Edmonton where one council, and related board of education, administers municipal and school affairs, to urban and rural residents. The Town of Drayton Valley would become a key building block in such a unified county and its currently separate incorporated status would be dissolved. However the present town jurisdiction would probably form the basis for the designation of an 'urban service area' within the unified county, to differentiate it from the surrounding 'rural service area.'

The first package would probably be the simplest to accomplish within existing legislative provisions. The second package would involve minor adjustments to existing legislation since at present a county can only be formed where a municipal district has first been formed and operated for several years. The third approach would probably entail a special act of the legislature, along the lines of the Crowsnest Pass Municipal Unification Act, setting out any necessary provisions for urban/rural differentiation, electoral divisions, council composition etc.

5.3. Town of Drayton Valley:

Previous calls for a 'County of Drayton Valley' do not seem to have envisaged incorporation of the Town of Dratyon Valley into the new county for other than school purposes. The current town council's favourable disposition to formation of a new county must also be viewed in the context of a traditional, rather than unified, county. The main advantage of a new traditional county to the Town of Drayton Valley would be the replacement of four rural jurisdictions, centred remote from the town, with one rural municipality centred in town. The town probably anticipates that such an arrangement will make for greater administrative convenience, more sensitive and collaborative attention to area concerns, and better prospects for inter-municipal harmony.

Presently the town has major concerns relating to cost-sharing, involving rural municipalities, for various town-based facilities e.g. library, cemetery, swimming pool. Through inter-municipal agreements the town is involved with the surrounding rural municipalities in some service areas where good cooperation has proved possible e.g. fire protection and emergency rescue; sanitary landfill. It is also interested in taking advantage of tax transfer arrangements with I.D. 14 in order that it might derive some benefit to compensate for its residential and municipal servicing of workers at oil/gas installations assessed and taxed in the I.D.

From the town's point of view a unified urban/rural county would provide an opportunity for the resolution - through neutralization - of existing cost-sharing disputes, simplification - through elimination - of existing inter-municipal agreements, and an automatic sharing in industrial assessment presently outside the town's boundaries. If the town was to merge with the rural area to form one unified county administrative economies would become realizable, and there would be the prospect of greater efficiencies in other service areas. Such gains would probably offset the costs of establishing the new county. The approach also avoids the creation of another local government unit: it simply elaborates upon an existing one to serve the needs of a wider area in a more comprehensive and unified manner.

If the Town was interested in supporting a unified county it would have to be prepared to adjust some of its financing practices in order that rural participants in the new local government did not feel they were subsidizing services of benefit only to residents of the urban area. For example, a garbage collection service charge would need to be introduced, instead of making up the deficit on this function from general taxation. Also, a considerable portion of the debt servicing under the roads/streets function is covered from general taxation rather than special levies: possibly re-debenturing, and further special levies restricted to benefitting property owners in the town, would assist in harmonizing finances in this particular area. The townspeople may also have to be prepared in a unified county context, to have the new entity named without specific reference to Drayton Valley, e.g. Brazeau County, Pembina County, Park Valley County, etc.

Even with such changes it is inevitable, from a rural resident's perspective, that the unified local government will seem to involve some subsidizing of the townspeople from the rural assessment base. This would make a traditional county more attractive to current rural residents, since it would provide them with exclusive access to the industrial tax base. The subsidy perception would be rooted in the difficulty experienced by a town such as Drayton Valley in having to finance a high level of servicing without the benefit of direct access to the wider assessment base constituted by the development which impinges on the town. Such imbalances between servicing responsibilities and assessment endowment are common in Alberta, with its fairly rigid urban/rural structuring of municipal government, especially given the tendency for industrial assessment to be concentrated in rural areas, and the reluctance of incorporated urban and rural municipalities to make tax-sharing agreements. The consequences include: chronic inter-municipal friction; complex inter-municipal service agreements; and under-utilization of the industrial tax base.

The unified county approach has been raised here because of an impression that it could well serve the particular needs of the general Drayton Valley area. It is premised mainly on the integrating role of the oil/gas sector of the local economy in merging the interests of urban and rural residents. It would only be worth pursuing however if there was strong support among existing urban and rural residents, both separately and in combination. If such a consensus does not exist the merits of an M.D. versus a traditional county could be evaluated.

5.4. The Contours of a Drayton Valley Area Local Government:

5.4.1. Base Data:

The base data for each possible building block of a new Drayton Valley area local government are presented in Table 5-1. The data differ from what was presented in Table 3-1, although the latter table, based on the original study areas arrangement (Map 1-1), has provided the basis for the re-estimates presented in Table 5-1. These refined figures relate to the adjusted areas, mainly based on school attendance patterns, discussed earlier in this section (Map 4-1).

The table includes comparative information for the Town of Drayton Valley, as well as some estimates for the Moon Lake-Magnolia area of Parkland County (within the Evansburg-Entwistle school attendance area). The latter estimates are based on one-fifth of the values registered for Secondary Study Area #4 (Table 3-1). This additional information was necessary to flesh out certain combination options for a new local government.

5.4.2. Optional Configurations:

The full set of basic configuration options is arrayed in Table 5-2. Four pairs of options are featured: for each pair one sub-option deals with an M.D. or traditional county form of local government, while the other sub-option incorporates the Town of Drayton Valley in a unified county form of government. Each pair of options encompasses progressively more territory, beginning with a minimum disruption scenario and building to a scenario that would impact relatively extensive areas of several existing municipalities. The areas referenced for each pair of options are indicated in Maps 5-1 to 5-4.

Average data, based on the ten rural municipalities sampled, are presented at the foot of Table 5-2. These reveal that all combination options would have a very healthy assessment base and a very good assessment mix in terms of industrial assessment. In terms of population, area and road inventory the narrowest configuration, Option A - involving only the rural area of south-west Parkland - would be very small (less than half the area average), would have only one-third of the road inventory of the average rural municipality, and would have a below average population. The inclusion of the Town of Drayton Valley, Option B improves the comparison only in terms of population size.

Option C, involving small parts of I.D. 14 and Leduc County, represents a more average unit in terms of population and area, but road responsibilities, usually the most important rural municipal function, would remain well below average. Option D basically adds in the population of the Town of Drayton Valley.

Option E, involving larger parts of I.D. 14 and Leduc County, as well as parts of Wetaskiwin County and Clearwater M.D., is a comparatively substantial rural unit in population and area terms, with road responsibilities closer to, but still short of, the average. However, such a unit would probably have unusual 'resource road' responsibilities in the oil-patch/forest reserve. Option F, incorporating the town, and with its particular road needs, further minimizes the significance of the below average road inventory position.

Option G, the maximum configuration detailed here, would create a top-flight rural municipality, servicing a substantial population and road network spread over a comparatively large area. The incorporation of the town of Drayton Valley, Option H, would result in the creation of a local government closely rivalling the largest rural municipalities, and topping several small cities.

5.4.3. Fiscal Capacities, Assessment Mix, and Densities:

Analytical statistics, relevant to an assessment of the financial feasibility of the various options outlined above, are presented in Table 5-3. On fiscal capacity grounds all options constitute feasible units, although some configurations are clearly more feasible than others. The options including the Town of Drayton Valley involve per capita capacities closer to the average, but per kilometre capacities further above the average. A more appropriate comparison for these options (B, D, F, H) would be units such as Strathcona County, but there is no such unified county in a non-metropolitan area of Alberta to provide a truly meaningful comparison. In general however the options including the town have a fiscal capacity comfortably above Strathcona's in per capita terms, though less than half the Strathcona level in per kilometre terms (most of that County's road inventory is high standard surfaces in a dense network servicing the 'Hamlet' of Sherwood Park and, especially, the considerable rural subdivision development).

Apart from healthy fiscal capacity levels all the options represent an excellent assessment mix, with industrial assessment generally representing over 75% of the total assessment. (The current comparable Strathcona County statistic is around 60%.) Such a mix eases the burden on residential and farmland taxpayers, in comparative terms, and benefits industry to an extent because there are more industrial properties to share this portion of the total tax burden.

In population density terms almost all the options range above the average, and this is always the case for the options including the town. From a road density perspective all the options range well below the average, especially so for the more extensive area options. The new local government would probably have to anticipate unusual road demands either in terms of new farmland access or for improved access to the resource developments located outside the agriculturally settled areas in the Green Zone.

5.5. Net Municipal Tax Cost Projections:

To permit an estimate of the net municipal tax costs of operating a new local government in the Drayton Valley area, and to enable a comparison of the changes to be anticipated in the related rate of taxation, it was necessary to establish a set of assumptions about the financing of each municipal function. These assumptions are set out in Table 5-4. They have been prepared on the basis of estimates of the existing situation, or in relation to the perceived service situation in comparable municipal contexts. Background reference data, comprising extensive financial tables, are available upon request.

The estimations and assumptions were guided by a concern to allow for the possibility of increased net costs to simply maintain the existing service levels, but there was also an effort to provide room for an improvement in service levels. For example, provision was made for continuance of the policing function now undertaken by Parkland County, but it was assumed that there would be no need for a new local government to maintain the level of municipal planning activity currently undertaken in Parkland.

In round terms the pro forma budget for the rural service area provides for transportation/public works gross expenditures of around $2000 per km, function revenues (mainly the rural road grant and internal transfers) of $500 per km for a net function cost of $1500 per km. For all other functions, excluding provision for general contingency reserves, the pro forma allows for expenditures grossing around $275 per capita in the rural service area. Related function revenues have been estimated at around $75 per capita giving a total net cost for these functions of about $200 per capita.

To complete the pro forma for the rural service area the following additional assumptions were made:

i) general contingency reserve provision equivalent to 10% of the total expenditures on all other functions.

ii) general unconditional grant revenues at a rate of $40 per capita.

iii) general own-source (non-tax) revenues at a rate of $50 per capita.

iv) provisions for a surplus equivalent to 10% of total function net costs, excluding F.97 (contingency reserve provision).

For those options including the Town of Drayton Valley (B, D, F and H) the 'rural service area' estimates were adjusted upwards as follows: $5,000,000 expenditures; $3,000,000 function revenues; $2,000,000 net function costs; $700,000 general, non-tax revenues; and $1,300,000 general municipal taxes to balance. These estimates incorporate adjustments to reflect different financing by the Town of certain function deficits, to make an allowance for unusually high internal transfer activity in recent years, and, generally, to accomplish a smoothing out of recent aberrant trends affecting the town's finances, and a harmonizing of the urban and rural financial situations. No allowance has been made for economies that might be achieved through a unified urban/rural approach, nor has any specific provision been made for any lasting costs that might be associated with the start-up of a new local government in the area. These issues are assumed to balance one another in cost terms.

It was also noted however that the Town has recently been making a particularly strong effort to boost general contingency reserves (making the assumed level for the rural service area calculations appear somewhat meagre). There may therefore be scope for more of a 'harmonizing' effort in this area. Perhaps the rural provision is inadequate given the town's recent experience, or possibly the town has been unusually active in building such reserves. Some intermediate level should probably be considered when more detailed calculations are undertaken. For now it may simply be noted that a high level of general reserve provision makes much sense in the Drayton Valley area situation, where there is a great dependence on conventional oil/gas production-related assessment. Such production will be declining sooner or later, and it makes sense for the local government to plan for this period by operating its own version of the province's Heritage Savings Trust Fund. Without such a strategy it is probable that current assessment will, to some extent, be 'wasted,' and while the present generation might be enabled to escape with relatively low taxes, future generations would almost certainly face the prospect of relatively high taxes, and the future viability of the local government could be brought into question.

The resulting comparative equalized mill rates (for general municipal taxation) are presented in Table 5-5. The table includes the rates for each option as well as the actual comparative rate for 1984 for each affected jurisdiction, and the rate for the diminished jurisdiction had the separate local government, represented by each option, been in operation in 1984.

As expected the unified county options, because of the inclusion of the Town of Drayton Valley, exhibit a higher rate than the purely rural M.D. or traditional county options. The unified approach is of obvious benefit to town taxpayers, compared with the status quo, but to the apparent detriment of present rural taxpayers. The unified approach appears to deny this latter group the possibility of substantial tax cuts. It may be argued however, on the basis of the preceding discussion of contingency reserve provision levels, that the purely rural options (A, C, E, G) are probably understated, while the town rate is over-stated. This would tend to close the gap between urban and rural interests leaving the small difference to be explained primarily by the more fortunate circumstances of the rural area in terms of low-cost industrial assessment.

While there is little doubt that the Drayton Valley townspeople would benefit from being included in any configuration, regardless of the area encompassed, the areal extent of the local government unit would be of greater concern to current rural taxpayers. Consider for example the perspective of the current rural Parklander living in the Drayton Valley area: the indications are that their municipal tax rates would increase for all the unified options, except Option F, and for one of the purely rural options, Option G (although the rate for this would only increase to about the same level as that projected for taxpayers in the diminished Parkland.)

From the perspective of current Leduc County residents included in the new local government they could anticipate significant tax rate decreases, especially in the case of the purely rural options, though the decreases would remain substantial for the unified options also.

Wetaskiwin County residents included in the new unit would probably experience lowered tax rates under the purely rural Option E, with no change in the case of the associated unified option, Option F. It is almost certain however that the area would benefit from higher service levels under a new unit than Wetaskiwin County can presently afford to provide.

The industry now paying taxes in the area of Clearwater M.D. that might be included in a new unit would notice a significant increase in the rate of municipal taxation, mainly because the current level is low. This would also be the case for industrial taxpayers in I.D. 14. The average rural rate of municipal taxation, based on the ten sampled, is presently around 35 to 40, well above all the rates indicated in the table, with the exception of Leduc County and the Town of Drayton Valley.

If the Chip Lake area of I.D. 14 was included in the new unit (Options G and H) a considerable increase in tax rates would be experienced by current residents of the area, partly because of the low rates enjoyed at present. It may also be noted that under the worst possible scenario for the diminished I.D. 14 (Options E-F) the increased I.D. rate (21.1) would still fall well short of any other rate indicated, excepting the M.D. of Clearwater.

Comparative expenditure effort statistics are presented in Table 5-6. The average expenditure effort for the ten-rural municipalities sampled was around $100 per $1000 of equalized assessment in 1984. Because of the considerable assessment levels present for all the options, as well as the existing study municipalities, fairly substantial municipal operations can be achieved with comparatively limited expenditure effort.

Whereas the inclusion of the Town of Drayton Valley resulted in a greater equalized mill rate for the unified options, in comparison with the purely rural options, such a strategy also has the effect of considerably boosting the expenditure effort associated with the various options. Indeed, in some respects the expenditure efforts indicated for the purely rural options would entail a deterioration in the present situation, at least for those areas outside of I.D. 14 and Clearwater M.D. All the unified options would result in the achievement of significantly enhanced expenditure efforts in the Parkland context, and, especially, in the I.D. 14 and Clearwater M.D. contexts. The levels attained would also compare much more respectably with the current situation in Leduc and Wetaskiwin Counties.

5.6. Summary and Conclusions:

A consideration of various interest groups, having a possible stake in a new local government unit for the Drayton Valley area, resulted in the identification of several possible building blocks. In the more settled areas the blocks were defined on the basis of senior high school attendance areas; in the oil-patch and forest reserve a certain expediency necessitated a regard for less satisfactory boundaries, based on school system ties or the provincial electoral division. Further efforts to better define appropriate boundaries might be merited but it is difficult to envisage any major changes to those used here without seriously disrupting existing communities based around schools.

Three main 'packages' of local government were identified for consideration in the Drayton Valley area context. One package features a combination of an M.D. for the rural area, the existing Town for the urban area, and a parallel new school authority, or reliance on the existing school systems. The second package envisages a traditional County, incorporating the Town for school purposes only. The third arrangement would involve a single Unified, urban/rural, County doing away with the need for a separately incorporated Town of Drayton Valley. The town stands to probably benefit indirectly from either of the 'purely rural' packages, and would almost certainly benefit directly if it was dissolved into a unified county.

Four sets of optional local government configurations were investigated, each encompassing progressively more territory and/or impinging on more existing local authorities. Each set involved a 'purely rural' option and a 'unified county' option, incorporating the Town of Drayton Valley. All options were assessed as viable and feasibile local government units, though some appeared to make more sense than others.

For most of the affected areas projected municipal tax rates appeared to be roughly similar or slightly less than those actually experienced in 1984. Whatever local government may be created would be well advised to avoid any temptation to take major tax cuts, and would instead be encouraged to build up general contingency reserves to be drawn upon when the expected eventual decline in conventional oil production begins to have an adverse impact on the area's oil-patch assessment base.

A separate local government for the general Drayton Valley area is highly feasible at the present time, almost regardless of what areas might be combined to constitute the new unit. The development would not be associated with major changes in municipal taxation rates for most taxpayers, and taxation should not be decisive factor.

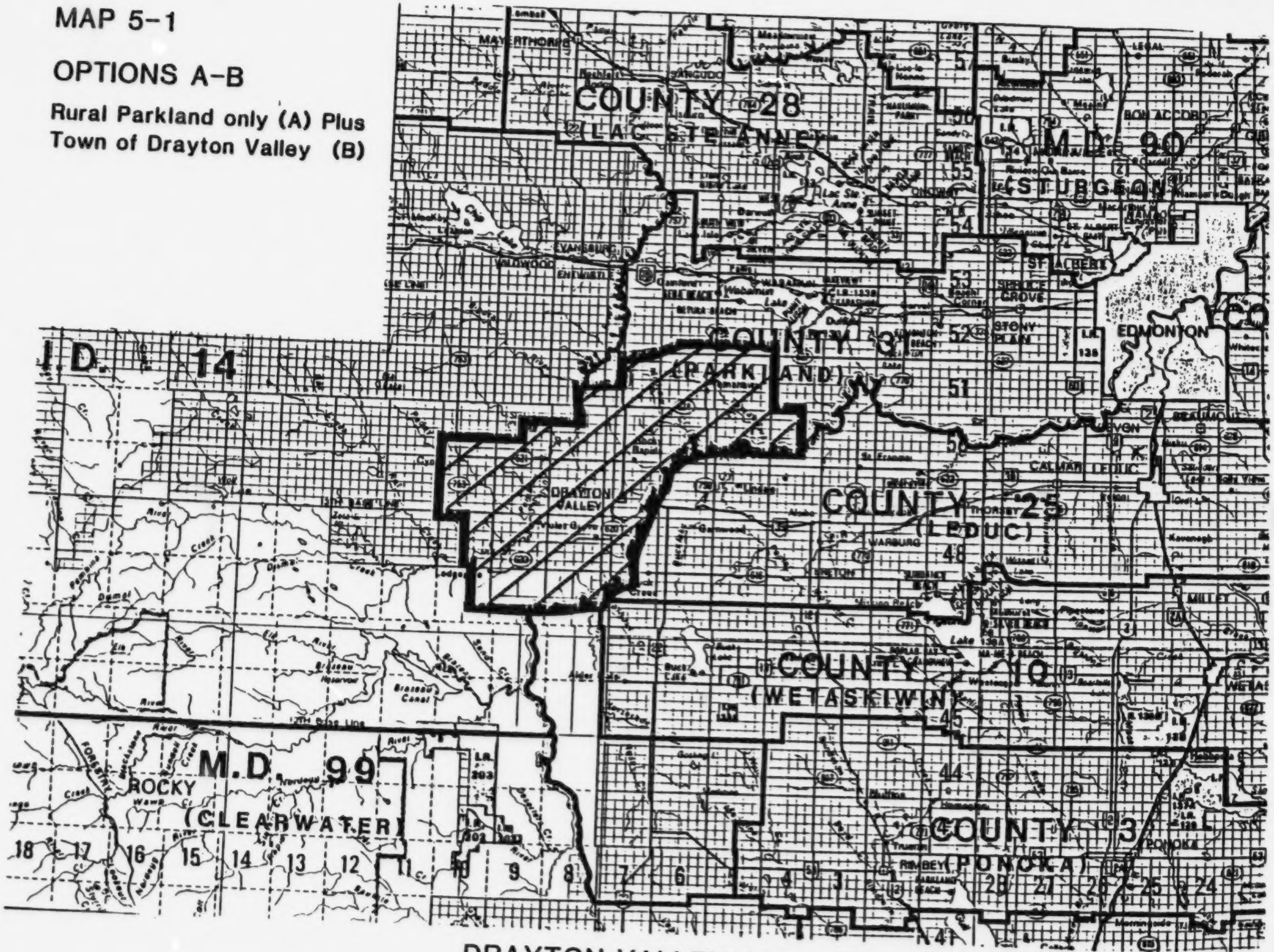
Of greater consequence would be the particular areas that could be sensibly included in a new unit. Ideally, the jurisdiction should encompass areas where Drayton Valley has a dominant or significant influence, in comparison with competing centres, regardless of present municipal boundaries. This ideal needs to be conditioned by the assumption that the taxpayers in these areas find Drayton Valley to be a more convenient and acceptable local government centre than the present arrangements. There must be a general granting of consent to be governed from Drayton Valley under a generally acceptable form of government with fair and reasonable representation for all areas.

It would be incumbent upon any new local government in the Drayton Valley area to be particularly sensitive to the interests and concerns of taxpayers in outlying areas, especially in relation to school provisions. Any tendency to over-centralize servicing in Drayton Valley would have to be resisted. If the local government covered an extensive area some formal satellite service centre policy would be necessary, and the new council might wish to adopt particular innovations to deal with the situation, e.g. a mobile general administration unit, small sub-office operations, or holding every other council session in a community outside Drayton Valley. When wondering about justifying such moves the council would simply have to recall the difficulties and frustrations experienced in those areas now interested in a separate local government for the Drayton Valley area.

MAP 5-1

OPTIONS A-B

Rural Parkland only (A) Plus
Town of Drayton Valley (B)


COUNTY 28
(LAC STE ANNE)
M.D. 90
(STURGEON)
COUNTY 31
(PARKLAND)
I.D. 14
COUNTY 25
(LEDUC)
COUNTY 10
(WETASKIWIN)
COUNTY 3
(PONOKA)
M.D. 99
(CLEARWATER)
ROCKY
DRAYTON VALLEY
EDMONTON
MAYERTHORPE
EVANSBURG
ENTWISTLE
STONY PLAIN
SPRUCE GROVE
ST. ALBERT
LEGAL
BON ACCORD
LEDUC
CALMAR
THORSBY
WARBURG
DEVON
BEAUMONT
MILLET
WETASKIWIN
PONOKA
RIMBEY
57
56
55
54
53
52
51
50
48
45
44
41
18
17
16
15
14
13
12
11
10
9
8
7
6
4
3
28
27
26
25
24

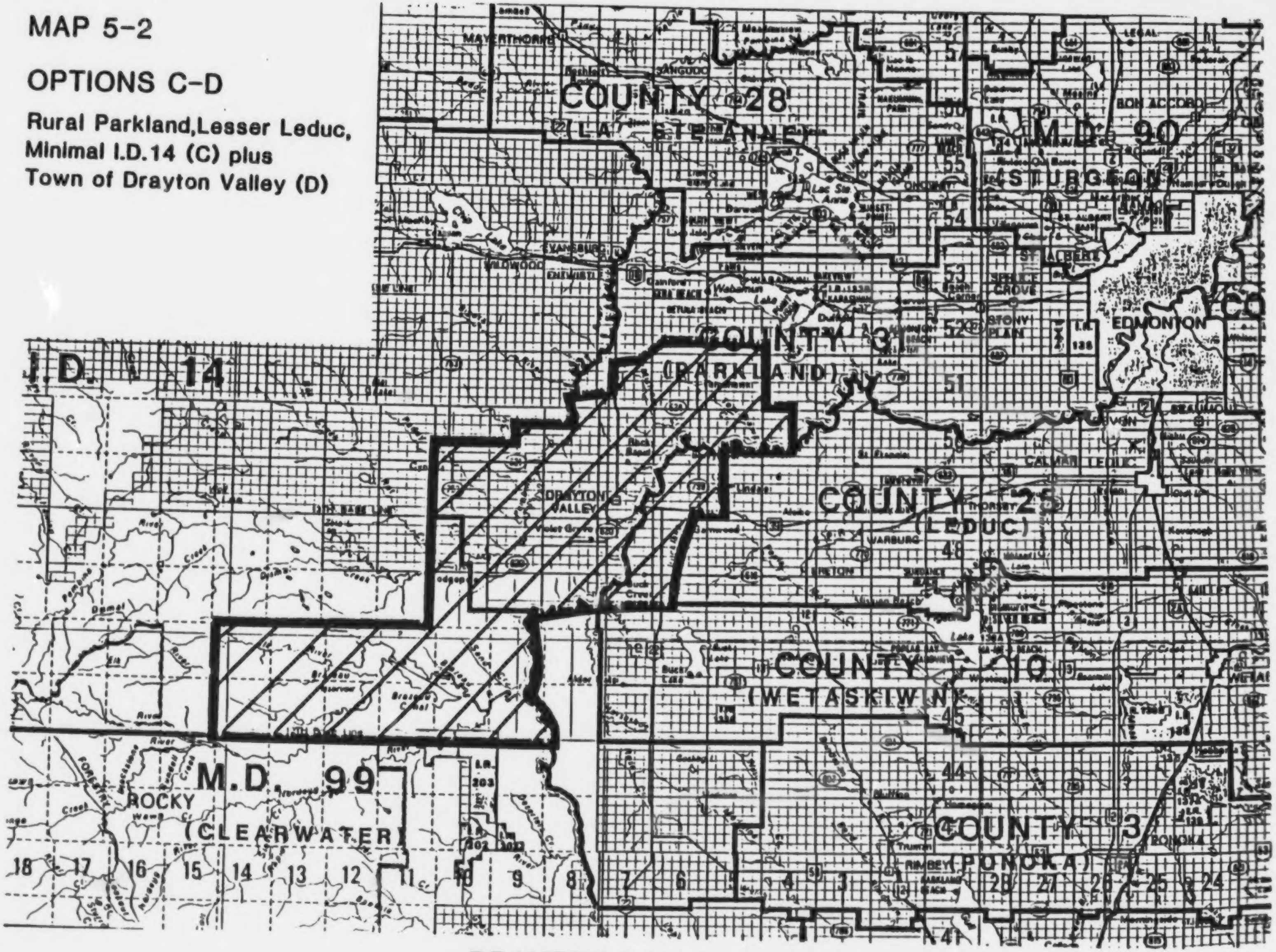
DRAYTON VALLEY AREA MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

CONFIGURATION OPTIONS

MAP 5-2

OPTIONS C-D

**Rural Parkland,Lesser Leduc,
Minimal I.D.14 (C) plus
Town of Drayton Valley (D)**


COUNTY 28
(LAC STE ANNE)
M.D. 90
(STURGEON)
COUNTY 31
(PARKLAND)
I.D. 14
COUNTY 25
(LEDUC)
COUNTY 10
(WETASKIWIN)
COUNTY 3
(PONOKA)
M.D. 99
(CLEARWATER)
EDMONTON
DRAYTON VALLEY
MAYERTHORPE
EVANSBURG
ENTWISTLE
WILDWOOD
STONY PLAIN
ST. ALBERT
SPRUCE GROVE
CALMAR
LEDUC
WARBURG
RIMBEY
PONOKA
ROCKY
18
17
16
15
14
13
12
11
10
9
8
7
6
4
3
28
27
26
25
24
57
56
55
54
53
52
51
50
48
45
44
41

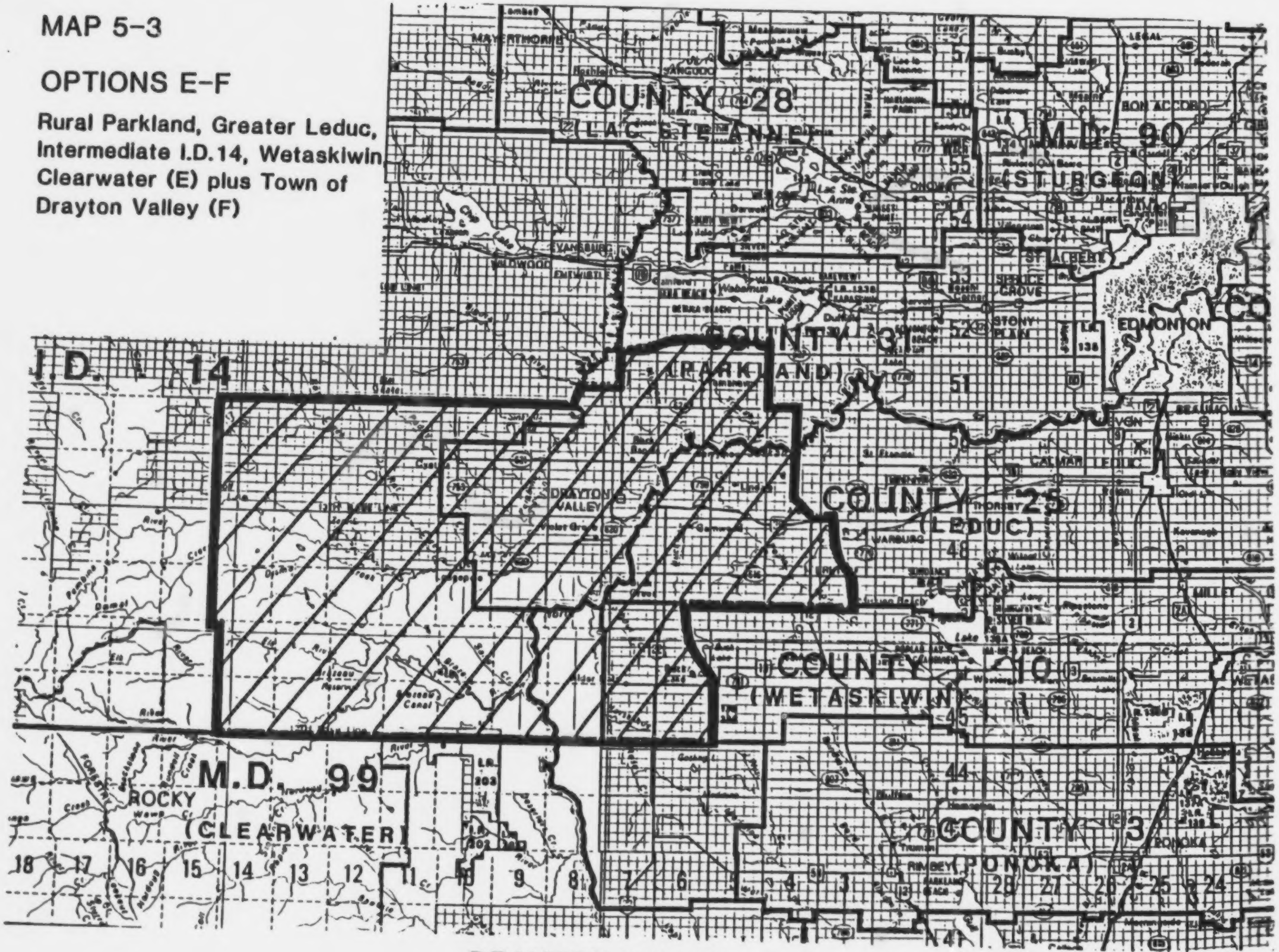
DRAYTON VALLEY AREA MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

CONFIGURATION OPTIONS

MAP 5-3

OPTIONS E-F

Rural Parkland, Greater Leduc, Intermediate I.D.14, Wetaskiwin, Clearwater (E) plus Town of Drayton Valley (F)


COUNTY 28
(LAC STE ANNE)
M.D. 90
(STURGEON)
EDMONTON
COUNTY 31
(PARKLAND)
I.D. 14
DRAYTON VALLEY
COUNTY 25
(LEDUC)
COUNTY 10
(WETASKIWIN)
M.D. 99
ROCKY
(CLEARWATER)
COUNTY 3
(PONOKA)
ST. ALBERT
STONY PLAIN
SPRUCE GROVE
CALMAR
LEDUC
WARBURG
THORSBY
RIMBEY
PONOKA
EVANSBURG
WILDWOOD
ENTWISTLE
MAYERTHORPE
SANGUDO
BON ACCORD
LEGAL
BEAUMONT
MILLET
WETASKIWIN
BRETON
18
17
16
15
14
13
12
11
10
9
8
7
6
4
3
28
27
26
25
24
57
56
55
54
53
52
51
48
45
44

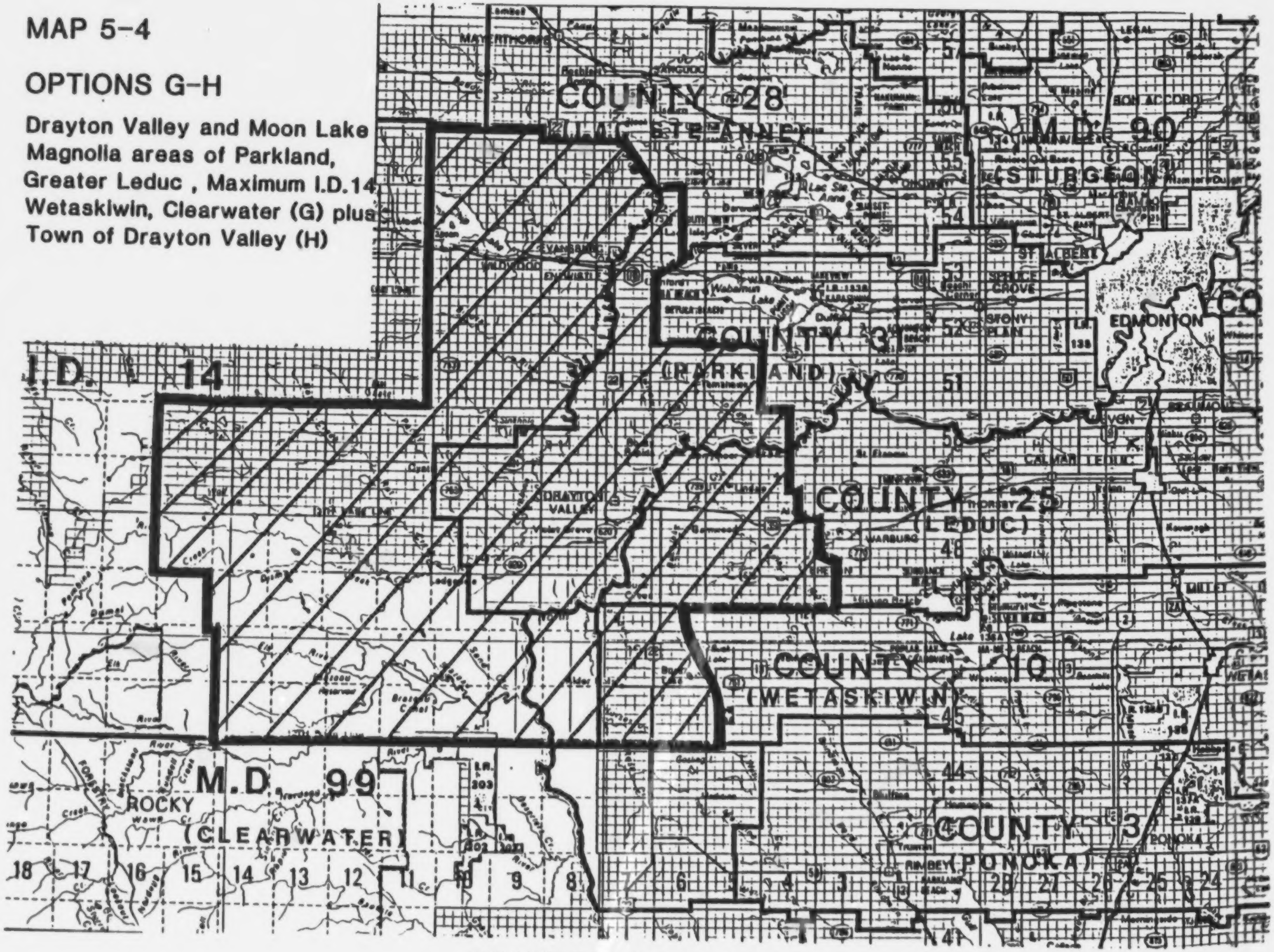
DRAYTON VALLEY AREA MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

CONFIGURATION OPTIONS

MAP 5-4

OPTIONS G-H

Drayton Valley and Moon Lake Magnolia areas of Parkland, Greater Leduc , Maximum I.D.14, Wetaskiwin, Clearwater (G) plus Town of Drayton Valley (H)


COUNTY 28
(LAC STE ANNE)
M.D. 90
(STURGEON)
I.D. 14
COUNTY 31
(PARKLAND)
EDMONTON
ST ALBERT
SPRUCE GROVE
STONY PLAIN
DRAYTON VALLEY
COUNTY 25
(LEDUC)
CALMAR
LEDUC
COUNTY 10
(WETASKIWIN)
COUNTY 3
(PONOKA)
PONOKA
M.D. 99
ROCKY
(CLEARWATER)
MAYERTHORPE
BON ACCORD
LEGAL
57
56
55
54
53
52
51
50
49
48
47
46
45
44
18
17
16
15
14
13
12
11
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
28
27
26
25
24

DRAYTON VALLEY AREA MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

CONFIGURATION OPTIONS

TABLE 5-1: A DRAYTON VALLEY AREA LOCAL GOVERNMENT: REVISED BASE DATA, 1984

	Population	Area (ha)	Sec./ Loc. Roads (kms)	Total Equalized Assessment ($)	Industrial (S.F.F. Eq.) Assessment ($)	Pipe- and Power- (Eq.) Ass. ($)
Parkland County:						
Drayton Valley Area:	3,952	149,488	707	74,740,366	66,549,681	51,318,561
Moon Lake-Magnolia:	433	39,628	112	3,538,032	2,060,854	1,046,945
Town of Drayton Valley:	4,924	745	34	35,995,070	14,696,280	1,055,606
Improvement District No. 14:						
Minimal:	29	132,467	47	13,135,903	12,925,127	8,108,465
Intermediate:	29	308,474	53	36,534,061	36,349,767	22,446,221
Maximum:	2,192	506,612	613	54,224,221	54,224,035	27,680,954
Leduc County:						
Lesser:	665	31,716	217	13,315,990	10,206,015	9,118,933
Greater:	1,928	82,814	521	33,733,843	28,816,985	22,406,522
Wetaskiwin County:	903	47,308	219	11,770,117	9,796,428	5,915,380
Clearwater Municipal District:	8	28,750	-	4,793,584	4,765,046	4,151,379

Sources:
Table 4-1 percentage reductions applied to Table 3-1 and 3-4 base data.
(Moon Lake-Magnolia estimates based on one-fifth of the values for S.S.A.#4 in Tables 3-1 and 3-4.)

Note: For maps defining the various sub-areas see Maps 5-1 to 5-4, and, more generally, Map 4-1.

TABLE 5-2: DRAYTON VALLEY AREA LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONFIGURATION OPTIONS - REVISED BASE DATA (1984)

Options	Constituents	Population	Area (ha)	Sec./Loc. Rds. (kms)	Total Eq. Assessment	Industrial (SFP) Eq. Ass.	Pipe-/Power-line Eq. Ass.
A.	Drayton Valley area of Parkland	3,952	149,488	707	74,740,366	66,549,681	51,318,561
B.	Parkland (Drayton Valley area) + Town of Drayton Valley	8,876	150,233	741	110,735,436	81,245,961	60,881,801
C.	Drayton Valley area of Parkland + I.D. 14 (minimal scenario) + Leduc County (lesser scenario)	4,646	313,671	971	101,192,259	90,323,510	68,545,959
D.	Option C + Town of Drayton Valley	9,570	314,416	1,005	137,187,329	105,019,790	69,601,565
E.	Drayton Valley Area of Parkland + I.D. 14 (intermediate scenario) + Leduc County (greater scenario) + Wetaskiwin County + Clearwater M.D.	6,820	616,834	1,500	161,571,971	146,277,907	106,237,000
F.	Option E + Town of Drayton Valley	11,744	617,579	1,534	197,567,041	160,974,187	107,293,000
G.	Drayton Valley and Moon Lake-Magnolia areas of Parkland + I.D. 14 (maximum scenario) + Leduc County (greater scenario) + Wetaskiwin County + Clearwater Municipal District	9,416	854,600	2,172	182,800,163	158,643,029	112,520,000
H.	Option G. + Town of Drayton Valley	14,340	855,345	2,284	228,795,233	173,339,309	113,575,000
5	Counties Average	4,229	368,804	2,385	46,973,582	18,750,836	11,106,802
5	M.D.'s Average	4,455	352,442	1,871	45,002,658	19,933,026	8,019,678
10	Rural Municipalities Association	4,342	360,623	2,128	45,988,120	19,341,931	9,563,240

Source: Tables 5-1 and 4-2.

TABLE 5-3: FISCAL CAPACITY, ASSESSMENT MIX, AND DENSITY STATISTICS (1984 DATA)

	EQUALIZED ASSESSMENT			ASSESSMENT MIX	DENSITIES (per sq. km)	
	$ per capita	$ per hectare	$ per km.	(S.F.F. as % of Total Eq.)	Population	Roads
OPTION:						
A	18,912	500	105,714	89	2.6	0.47
B	12,476	737	149,441	73	5.9	0.49
C	21,781	323	104,214	89	1.5	0.31
D	14,335	436	136,504	77	3.0	0.32
E	23,691	262	107,715	91	1.1	0.24
F	16,823	320	128,792	81	1.9	0.25
G	19,414	214	84,162	87	1.1	0.25
H	15,955	267	100,173	76	1.7	0.27
5C Average	11,106	127	19,692	40	1.2	0.65
5 M.D. Average	10,101	128	24,050	54	1.3	0.53
10 R.M. Average	10,591	128	21,608	42	1.2	0.59

Source: Table 5-2.

TABLE 5-4: ASSUMED FUNCTION FINANCES: (OPTIONS A, C, E AND G)

FUNCTIONS:		Expenditure	Revenue	Net Cost
		$ p.c.	$ p.c.	$ p.c.
11.	Council	15	-	15
12.	General Admin.	80	15	65
21.	Police	35	5	30
23.	Fire	15	5	10
24.	Emergency Measures	1	0.5	0.5
25.	Ambulance Services	10	-	10
26.	Bylaws Enforcement	5	2	3
31/32:	Transp./Public Works	2,000 (p. km.)	500 (p. km.)	1,500 (p. km.)
41/42:	Water and Sewer System	10	5	5
43.	Garbage Collection/Disposal	10	-	10
51-56:	Social Services	10	8	2
61.	Municipal Planning	2	-	2
62.	Agricultural Services	35	20	15
71-74:	Recreation/Culture	45	15	30

TABLE 5-5: COMPARATIVE EQUALIZED MILL RATES (GEN. MUNICIPAL)

Option	Parkland		I.D. 14		Leduc		Wetaskiwin		Clearwater		Town of D.V.
	Act.	Dim.	Act.	Dim.	Act.	Dim.	Act.	Dim.	Act.	Dim.	Act.
A. 25.7	28.3	30.2	n.a.		n.a.		n.a.		n.a.		n.a.
B. 31.1	28.3	30.2	n.a.		n.a.		n.a.		n.a.		36.1
C. 24.8	28.3	30.2	17.1	18.1[1]	35.7	35.3[4]	n.a.		n.a.		n.a.
D. 29.5	28.3	30.2	17.1	18.1[1]	35.7	35.3[4]	n.a.		n.a.		36.1
E. 23.7	28.3	30.2	17.1	21.1[2]	35.7	37.7[5]	27.1	29.0	17.5	18.0	n.a.
F. 27.2	28.3	30.2	17.1	21.1[2]	35.7	37.7[5]	27.1	29.0	17.5	18.0	36.1
G. 29.9	28.3	30.2	17.1	18.0[3]	35.7	37.7[5]	27.1	29.0	17.5	18.0	n.a.
H. 30.8	28.3	30.2	17.1	18.0[3]	35.7	37.7[5]	27.1	29.0	17.5	18.0	36.1

Notes: "n.a.," not applicable; 'Act,' actual 1984 statistic for the undiminished unit; 'Dim,' calculated 1984 statistic for the diminished unit.
(Option Configurations elaborated in Table 5-2.)

References:

1. Diminished to 'minimal' extent; 2. to 'intermediate' extent; 3. to 'maximum' extent;
4. Diminished to 'lesser' extent; 5. to 'greater' extent.

TABLE 5-6: COMPARATIVE EXPENDITURE EFFORTS (Total expenditures per $1000 Eq. Ass.)

Option	Parkland		I.D. 14		Leduc		Wetaskiwin		Clearwater		Town of D.V.
	Act.	Dim.	Act.	Dim.	Act.	Dim.	Act.	Dim.	Act.	Dim.	Act.
A. 36.7	44.4	47.7	n.a.		n.a.		n.a.		n.a.		n.a.
B. 69.9	44.4	47.7	n.a.		n.a.		n.a.		n.a.		138.9
C. 34.9	44.4	47.7	25.2	26.81	55.8	57.5[4]	n.a.		n.a.		n.a.
D. 62.2	44.4	47.7	25.2	26.8[1]	55.8	57.5[4]	n.a.		n.a.		138.9
E. 33.1	44.4	47.7	25.2	31.3[2]	55.8	60.9[5]	53.5	55.3	23.5	24.1	n.a.
F. 52.4	44.4	47.7	25.2	31.3[2]	55.8	60.9[5]	53.5	55.3	23.5	24.1	138.9
G. 41.6	44.4	47.7	25.2	26.7[2]	55.8	60.9[5]	53.5	55.3	23.5	24.1	n.a.
H. 55.1	44.4	47.7	25.2	26.7[2]	55.8	60.9[5]	53.5	55.3	23.5	24.1	138.9

Notes: "n.a.," not applicable; 'Act,' actual 1984 statistic for the undiminished unit; 'Dim,' calculated 1984 statistic for the diminished unit.
(Option Configurations elaborated in Table 5-2.)

References:

1. Diminished to 'minimal' extent; 2. to 'intermediate' extent; 3. to 'maximum' extent;
4. Diminished to 'lesser' extent; 5. to 'greater' extent.

6. SCHOOL SYSTEM IMPACTS AND OPTIONS:

6.1. Introduction:

6.1.1. The Presentation in Perspective:

The following presentation, dealing with school system matters, proceeds from the assumption that the creation of a new municipality in the Drayton Valley area may possibly entail, in effect, the creation of a new local government; i.e. a traditional rural county or a unified urban/rural county. Alternatively, if the county form is not preferred, a new school division paralleling a new municipal district might be pursued. Technically, revised municipal government arrangements could accompany maintenance of the status quo in education terms, i.e. with the existing school systems continuing to serve the needs of a new municipal district. However, it is likely that the resulting crossing of municipal and school system loyalties would prove generally unacceptable.

The presentation offered here discusses school system implications in a general preliminary manner: it is no substitute for a thorough, comprehensive and specific study of the issues related to education governance and finance that would be raised by active pursuit of new local government arrangements for the Drayton Valley area. Basically, the education impacts need to be evaluated from an educational perspective by Alberta Education. Such a study could be undertaken if and when a decision is made favouring at least the principle of establishing a new local government in the area. A more comprehensive education implications study could address in greater detail such issues as:

. the infrastructure costs for any new system and the potential effects on the infrastructures of the existing systems: It has been assumed for the purposes of the present study that such costs are largely variable, rather than fixed, but it is conceivable that a particular percentage reduction in students will not be accompanied by a similar percentage reduction in net costs, e.g. some head office overheads may not be easily eliminated; special resource people may have to be retained regardless of the size of the system. These may or may not be offset by what has been presumed to be slightly greater unit costs in servicing the western areas of each jurisdiction, on account of: remoteness from central office; sparser populations, and therefore more costly transportation per student; and generally lower utilization capacities, leading to costlier inefficiencies.

. the short-term and long-term viability of any new system and the affected systems: This would entail a thorough demographic analysis to project future enrollment levels; and to determine how population composition trends might affect educational programming, servicing, staffing, facility utilization and transportation requirements. In general however it appears that there is so much assessment available in the region that it is difficult to foresee system viability being brought into question.

. the viability of individual schools, and the appropriateness of existing school attendance areas. It has been assumed here that the existing school units and areas are viable and appropriate, although it is known that some schools are operating at relatively low capacities. The creation of a new system may present an opportunity for resolution of any problems relating to existing schools and their attendance areas.

- the education grants regime and related implications: While most grants appear to be awarded mainly on a per student basis some may be sensitive to changes in the system's assessment base per student (e.g. equalization grants), or population density per student (e.g. transportation grants). A grants balance sheet for any new system and affected systems would be desirable.

- the transitional costs of any separation: Financial assistance may be required due to school utilization declines which would then reduce debenture funding support for school capital projects. Alternatively, the affected systems may be favourably impacted if school utilization capacities are increased in the diminished situations.

The above issues are indicative of the matters that could be more fully addressed in a separate education impact study. None are believed to have the potential of precluding the establishment of a new local government, should this appear justifiable and appropriate on municipal grounds. It is therefore suggested that such a study be implementation-oriented, identifying appropriate measures to mitigate any adverse effects and to capitalize upon any mutually beneficial opportunities presented by the prospect of a change.

6.1.2. Impact Areas and New System Options:

Information is presented here on the approximate financial implications for those school systems which could conceivably give up portions of their *existing jurisdiction to a new entity. Similarly,* some estimates are made of the broad financial contours of a new school system serving the Drayton Valley area. The four configuration options discussed in the previous section are used as the basis for evaluating the related school system options (Maps 5-1 to 5-4). The impacts experienced by existing systems are assessed in terms of the extent of jurisdiction that may be lost, depending on the configuration of the new system.

In general, the boundaries of these adjusted areas are similar to senior high school attendance areas (Map 2-4), rather than the original study areas arrangement (Map 1-1). The adjusted study areas used are indicated in Map 4-1. Hence, in Leduc County's case the impact to be experienced would vary according to whether only the 'lesser' area was involved (Option C/D), or whether the 'greater' area (including also the 'lesser' area) was involved (Options E/F and G/H).

On the west, within the Yellowhead School Division jurisdiction, three levels of possible impact are assessed. The 'minimal' scenario applies to Option C/D and includes both the Brazeau Reservoir 'island' currently assigned to Parkland, and the contiguous area which is 'unorganized' for school purposes (See Map 2-3; School System Boundaries): Only the portion of 'unorganized' territory within the original 'core study area' has been recognised in the 'minimal' scenario. The 'intermediate' scenario (Options E/F and G/H) corresponds basically with the original 'core study area' involving I.D. 14 (Map 1-1), which in turn was defined as the north-western boundaries of the Drayton Valley provincial electoral division (Map 1-2). The 'maximum' scenario adds in the Chip Lake area of I.D. 14, as defined by the Grand Trunk (Evansburg) senior high school attendance area. This comes into play in Option G/H.

Comparative 1984 data on the four main school systems which may be affected are presented in Table 6-1. There are many broad similarities between each system, although in some cases adjustments had to be made to the Leduc County data, related to the 1984 establishment of a public school system in the City of Leduc. No average comparative data are readily available but it is believed that the four school systems are generally offering a high standard of service at moderate tax levels on account of a combination of economies of scale and healthy assessment situations.

It is striking how close the four systems are in terms of several financial statistics: e.g. all fiscal capacity categories: operating expenses per student; S.F.P.F. transfers per student; other grants per student; and supplementary requisitions per student. These similarities encourage the view that the statistical levels and financial profiles of the existing systems are liable to very little change if the systems happen to be diminished. They also suggest that fairly similar statistics and profiles could well apply to any new system that may be created in the Drayton Valley area, regardless of the configuration. However, as will be noted later, a new system would be particularly well endowed with Electric Power and Pipe-Line assessment and related tax benefits. This could depress grant entitlements. There would also be relatively high expenditure levels in the initial years of operating (starting-up) the new system.

Details of the schools within, or serving parts of, the original study areas arrangement (Map 1-1) are presented in Table 6-2. The schools located within each configuration option are as follows:

	CONFIGURATION OPTIONS			
SCHOOLS BY SCHOOL SYSTEM	A/B (Map 5-1) (p. 5-28)	C/D (Map 5-2) (p. 5-29)	E/F (Map 5-3) (p. 5-30)	G/H (Map 5-4) (p. 5-31)
Parkland County:				
Eldorado (D.V.)	X	X	X	X
Frank Maddock (D.V.)	X	X	X	X
D.V. "B"	X	X	X	X
H.W. Pickup (D.V.)	X	X	X	X
Tomahawk	X	X	X	X
Entwistle				X
Leduc County:				
Lindale			X	X
Breton Elementary			X	X
Breton High			X	X
Wetaskiwin County:				
Alder Flats			X	X
Buck Lake			X	X
Yellowhead S.D.:				
Evansview (Evansburg)				X
Grand Trunk (Evansburg)				X
Wildwood				X

The new system would also encompass two Roman Catholic school systems, one around Drayton Valley - Violet Grove, and the other around Tomahawk (Map 2-3). The latter system appears to be virtually defunct, while the former system operates St. Anthony's school (K-9) in the town of Drayton Valley. It is believed that no other separate school systems would be encompassed by any of the new system configurations.

6.2. Parkland County School System:

6.2.1. General Discussion: Existing Arrangements:

Drayton Valley is the major school centre in the west end of Parkland County: it houses two elementary schools, a junior high school and a senior high school (as well as one separate school system facility - St. Anthony's). The senior high school catchment encompasses the Tomahawk school (K-9) as well as the extreme west end of Leduc County (Map 2-4). The latter students are the subject of a formal directive whereby Leduc County pays Parkland County to educate these students, and also covers the students' transportation expenses. A few families from the extreme north-west end of Wetaskiwin County have in the past chosen to send their children to Drayton Valley rather than to Alder Flats. This has been at their own expense for tuition and transportation.

To the north of Tomahawk the school centres within Parkland are at Seba Beach (K-12) and Entwistle (K-9). The Seba Beach catchment focusses on the Lake Wabamum area, which is considered to be oriented mainly eastwards, towards the Edmonton metropolitan region. The Seba Beach school is presently operating at a relatively low capacity utilization level. It may be vulnerable to any 'knock-on' effects stemming from the creation of a new school authority, especially if this authority took in the Evansburg area of I.D. 14. There are presently two underutilized senior high school facilities within a comparatively short distance of one another, at Evansburg and Seba Beach.

The extreme north-western areas of Parkland County are oriented towards Evansburg-Entwistle for school purposes. There is one school in Entwistle (K-9) and two in Evansburg, Evansview (K-6) and Grand Trunk (7-12). The Grand Trunk catchment straddles the Pembina River, drawing students from as far west as Chip Lake (where Niton takes over) and as far east as Magnolia (where Seba Beach takes over). The school is presently operating at only 55% capacity. It would be important to ensure that a new school system did not diminish this catchment area or, ideally, the catchment might be increased to help raise the capacity level.

To the east of the Tomahawk and Seba Beach areas the senior high education centre is Stony Plain, the county seat. Wabamun, Duffield and Keephills high school students are all oriented towards Stony Plain.

6.2.2. Diminution Generalities and Financial Impact:

The 'Drayton Valley area' of Parkland County (Map 4-1) accounts for 16.6% of the total school system enrolment, rising to 18.2% when the 'Moon Lake-Magnolia' area is included (Table 6-3). These percentages have been used as a base for estimating the net costs attributable to west-end students. Slightly higher percentage reductions in net costs have been assumed, because of: comparative remoteness from the central office in Stony Plain; comparatively sparse student densities, impacting transportation costs; and slightly below average capacity utilization for the area in question. The percentages used (20% and 22%, respectively) happen to be slightly greater than the anticipated reductions in total system equalized assessment.

Higher percentage reductions in E.P. and P.-L. assessment are indicated, partly offset by much lower percentage reductions in Lands, Buildings, and Improvements (L.B.I.) assessment. It is therefore assumed that the Parkland County school system would experience a slightly greater reduction in net costs than it would in terms of assessment base.

Based on the data presented in Table 6-3 the 1984 supplementary requisitions schedule was re-calculated for both scenarios. The results are presented in Table 6-4. The main (equalized) mill rates would be little changed if the Parkland system was diminished under either scenario. The E.P.-P.L. rate would actually decline somewhat, while a slight decrease in the L.B.I. rate is also indicated if the larger reduction took place.

The former reductions would be of particular interest to electric power and pipe-line concerns in the east-end of the county, while the latter L.B.I. reduction would benefit urban supporters of the school system, including the Towns of Spruce Grove and Stony Plain. The Village of Entwistle would be virtually unaffected by the lesser diminution, and would benefit significantly if it was included in the new system (under Option G/H) (but see Appendix 3.3). The Town of Drayton Valley would also stand to benefit from inclusion in the new system (although, as will be seen later, the greatest benefit to the town would be experienced under Options C/D and E/F).

The diminished Parkland County system would also benefit from a small increase in its utilization capacity, up from 82.6% to 84.2% or 84.5%. It would therefore appear that the Parkland County school system might be better off, in terms of system finances, without its west-end. It is difficult to identify any current Parkland system interests, outside any new unit, which might be adversely affected if the system was diminished.

The Parkland County School Board is particularly anxious to see a specific study of education matters before any decision is made (see Appendices 3.1.1. and 3.1.2.).

6.3. Yellowhead School System:

The Yellowhead School Division is liable to be affected to the extent that I.D. 14 is diminished by the creation of a new local government in the Drayton Valley area. The only option not impacting either the I.D. or Yellowhead is Option A/B; the other three options would impact them to a progressively increasing extent (Table 6-5).

The least impact would be experienced under the 'minimal' scenario (Option C/D, Map 5-2). At present this is 'unorganized' for school purposes, except for an area around the Brazeau Reservoir which is organized into the Parkland school system (even though it is within I.D. 14). For this scenario any E.P./P.-L. assessment within this particular part of I.D. 14 would shift into the new jurisdiction. It would be lost to the Yellowhead system and its various supporters, but there would be no commensurate reduction in system net costs. Calculations indicate a 1% increase in the E.P./P.-L. rate for those properties remaining within the I.D., and a 5% increase in the L.B.I. rate affecting all the system supporters (Towns of Edson and Hinton, Villages of Evansburg and Wildwood, and I.D. 14) (see Table 6-6). This scenario will also adversely affect, to a minor extent, several other school systems which can presently claim a small portion (2.5%) of the I.D.'s E.P. and P.-L. assessment.

The 'intermediate' scenario (Option E/F, Map 5-3) has the potential to generate significant adverse effects for the Yellowhead system. I.D. 14 would contribute less L.B.I. assessment to the system, and there would be a major reduction in E.P. and P.-L. assessment, both without any decrease in the net costs of operating the system (Table 6-5). In the 1984 situation the L.B.I. rate would have increased by over 20%, and the E.P./P.-L. rate would have increased by about 4%. While the potential seriousness of such adverse effects should not be minimized, it may be noted that unusually significant system assessment growth, reflected in the 1985 equalized assessment, and projected to continue for the 1986 figure, would constitute a major moderating effect on these increases. It is in fact conceivable that the Yellowhead system rates, over the 1984-86 period, will exhibit decreases, even if a loss of jurisdiction on the scale of the 'intermediate' scenario was built in to the calculations.

If the 'maximum' scenario reduction had been in effect in 1984 the Yellowhead system would have lost some servicing responsibilities as well as assessment. This stems from the inclusion of the Chip Lake area of I.D. 14 in any new system having the Option G/H configuration.

Thus, Wildwood and Evansburg would become supporters of the new system, and Yellowhead would lose responsibility for the schools in these locations. The area accounts for just over 14% of the system's students (Table 6-5): it has been assumed that net costs would be reduced by approximately 15%. This is roughly the extent of the loss in terms of L.B.I. assessment, but is less than half the anticipated level of reduction in E.P./P.-L. assessment. As a consequence, if Yellowhead had been diminished to the extent of the maximum scenario in 1984 the L.B.I. rate would have been 12.5% greater than it was actually; the E.P./P.-L. rate would have been up by 2.5% (Table 6-6). Again, viewed over a longer period, such as 1984-86, there is the prospect of no rate increases or even rate decreases, on account of substantial growth in the system's equalized assessment.

The Yellowhead system's utilization capacity would increase somewhat if it lost responsibility for the Chip Lake area, rising from 75.9% to 78.4%. No such benefit would be experienced under the 'intermediate' and 'minimal' scenarios.

The School Division's reaction to the preliminary report is appended as Appendix 1.2.1. See also Appendices 1.2.2., 1.2.3., 1.2.4., and 1.2.5.

6.4. Leduc County School System:

6.4.1. General Discussion: Existing Arrangements:

An unusually complex school situation exists in the west end of Leduc County, partly on account of measures introduced in dealing with some concerns first raised over 10 years ago during a previous campaign for a separate county in the Drayton Valley area. The Town of

Drayton Valley is the school centre for most of the students residing in that part of Leduc County west of Buck-lake Creek. Lindale school also draws students from this area as well as the Carnwood area. Breton is also involved as the senior high school centre for students residing east of Buck-Lake Creek and south of the North Saskatchewan River (Map 2-4).

Lindale school (K-9), which is virtually operating at full capacity, is currently drawing 69 students from the immediate Lindale-Carnwood area, 21 students from the Berrymoor area (west of Buck-lake Creek), and 11 students from a zone west of Berrymoor, north of Highways 22 and 39, and east of the North Saskatchewan River. Students from this zone also have the option of going to Drayton Valley, at the expense of Leduc County. This dates from a provincial government directive given the county about ten years ago, which ordered Leduc County to provide transportation and to pay tuition for any students from this particular area, and from the Buck Creek area to the south, who wished to go to schools in Drayton Valley. In spite of this freedom a few families from this area still opt for Lindale over Drayton Valley (this involves 11 K-9 students out of a possible 31). However, approximately 149 students resident in Leduc County are presently educated in Drayton Valley: 21 students (Grades 10-12) are from the Berrymoor area while the remainder travel to Drayton Valley for all their schooling (i.e. K-12).

In 1980, in response to parental concerns in the Lindale area, the Leduc County Board of Education re-affirmed its earlier 'directive'-related policy in order to prevent exceptions in these defined attendance areas. Parents in the main Lindale school attendance area did not wish to see any of the designated K-9 children attending Drayton Valley. It is clear that careful consideration will have to be given to the Lindale school situation in any re-arrangement of local government in the general area: parental concern would appear to indicate the importance of measures to maintain the integrity of the school's current attendance area.

Eleven (11) students from the Lindale-Carnwood area receive their senior high education at Breton, but both Breton schools draw the vast majority of their enrolment from the area south of Highway 39 and east of Buck-lake Creek. The Breton high school suffered particularly from the provincial directive mentioned above, and this legacy partly explains the fact that the school is operating at only half-capacity. The relatively low capacity utilization at both Breton schools also exists despite the fact that they informally serve a few Wetaskiwin County residents from the Yeoford and Norbuck areas.

In 1980 the Leduc County Board of Education also examined the feasibility of centralizing Breton, Thorsby and Warburg High Schools in Warburg. At public meetings held throughout the affected areas it was clearly evident that any attempts which threatened the continued existence of these small high schools was totally unacceptable to the residents. For example, over 400 people packed the school gym in Breton to protest centralization in Warburg, and this feeling has not diminished in the ensuing years. Clearly, the Breton situation would also have to be dealt with very carefully in any local government re-arrangement, again with a view to maintaining the integrity of the present school attendance area.

The two scenarios affecting Leduc County which are covered in the present study have been defined with the Lindale and Breton school situations in mind. The 'lesser' area scenario (Option C/D) would require a special policy and tuition agreement whereby K-9 students within the present Lindale school attendance area, but also within the new jurisdiction, would be able to continue to use the Lindale school at no parental expense. Under this scenario the Lindale school would continue to be operated by, and would be located within, Leduc County. Under the 'greater' area scenario the Lindale and Breton schools, and the related school attendance areas, would remain in place and intact, with operational responsibility and jurisdiction shifting to the new authority. It should also be noted that one option (A/B) would involve maintenance of the status quo from a Leduc County school system perspective, in terms of operations, jurisdiction and the current directive-related arrangements.

6.4.2. Diminution Generalities and Financial Impact:

For the 'lesser' diminution it is assumed that the main net cost reductions would stem from tuition expenses currently incurred by the county and paid to Parkland. This amounts to around a 2.5% reduction which is comparable with the reduction in L.B.I. assessment (Table 6-7). However, there would be a significantly greater reduction in E.P./P.-L. assessment. As a consequence it is projected that the L.B.I. mill rate would increase slightly (up by around 2.7%) while the E.P./P.-L. rate would also rise by around 7%, if the system was diminished by the 'lesser' extent (Table 6-8). With no changes in system enrolment or capacity the 'lesser' diminution would confer no particular benefits on Leduc County, such as the increased capacity utilization noted for the Parkland and Yellowhead systems.

If the county school system was diminished to the 'greater' extent indicated (i.e. loss of the Lindale and Breton schools), enrolment would be reduced by 12.6% and capacity by 14.6% (Table 6-7). While L.B.I. assessment would decrease by smaller amounts, E.P. and P.-L. assessment would decline significantly. It is projected that system net costs would decrease by around 17.5% on account of the avoidance of current tuition expenses paid to Parkland, and after allowing for presumed higher unit operating costs in the west end (for the same reasons as was enumerated for Parkland).

The recalculated 1984 requisition schedules indicate the prospect of a small decrease in the L.B.I. school tax rate if the Leduc system was diminished by the 'greater' extent. This would benefit existing county tax-payers as well as urban supporters in the Towns of Beaumont and Calmar, the Villages of Thorsby, Warburg and New Sarepta, as well as three Summer Villages. The E.P./P.-L. rate would increase slightly, by around 2%, but would remain on a par with the existing comparable rate in neighbouring counties.

The 'greater' reduction would result in a modest increase in the Leduc County system's utilization capacity, up from 77% to 78.8%. This may marginally benefit the system as it strives to reduce the debt servicing costs of facility improvements (now underway at Beaumont and New Sarepta) or building new schools (e.g. the new high school under construction in Beaumont). The county board of education is not particularly impressed with such a prospective benefit, feeling that there are several schools in the county which should be written off for utilization purposes when the School Building Board applies its formula for the calculation of capital grants. Such a policy change by the Board, and not the loss of particular schools in the west end, would be preferred by the county school board.

It should also be pointed out that the Leduc County system is still in the throes of adjusting to the 1984 severance of the (City of) Leduc School District No. 297. The county has experienced a raft of problems on account of the new jurisdiction, in the areas of administration, specialists, and transportation, many having financial consequences. An indication was provided by the school board indicating that the combined budgets for the two systems exceeded the previous single jurisdiction budget by around 20 to 25% (some of which would be related to teacher salary settlement).

The calculations summarized in Table 6-8 indicate little change in the county system's financial situation if it happened to lose its current west end. The scale of any change affecting the system would be much less than what was involved in the formation of the Leduc School District. However, the prospect of a 20% or so increase in costs to the larger community, when an additional unit was created where one formerly sufficed, needs to be borne in mind. If anything, such a prospect commends consideration of a unified urban/rural county for the Drayton Valley area, where one existing unit could be expanded to serve a wider area, and greater numbers, with both municipal and school functions.

Before leaving the Leduc County situation it should also be recalled that the school system's assessment base will be boosted in a major way (by around one-third in terms of current levels) when the two Genesee power production units are in operation early next decade. This may be offset to some extent by any loss of existing assessment, at Nisku and the International Airport, related to any successful City of Leduc application to annex these areas. Whatever the outcome, however, the county school system is likely to be in a very comfortable financial position for the next decade or so.

For further information see Appendices 2.2.1., 2.2.2., and 2.3.2.

6.5. Wetaskiwin County School System:

6.5.1. Diminution Generalities and Financial Impact:

As presently formulated, Options E/F and G/H envisage the inclusion of the west end of Wetaskiwin County in a new school authority centred in Drayton Valley. As with all the other cases the inclusion has been made purely for the purpose of generating the maximum of information of potential interest to all people concerned to make an informed judgment of how they might be best served by any re-arrangement of local government in the general area. It is possible, with the paving of Highway 22 from the Drayton Valley area to the Alder Flats/Buck Lake turnoff, that the west end of Wetaskiwin County could be included in a new school jurisdiction centred to the north. However, it is virtually certain that the communities would wish to retain the present school, and school catchment, arrangements, i.e. the complementary schools at Alder Flats (Grades 5-12) and Buck Lake (Grades 1-4) (Map 2-4).

While the Buck Lake school is currently operating close to capacity the Alder Flats high school is operating at only around 63% of capacity. The neighbouring high school at Winfield is operating at an even lower capacity (52.3%). Some rationalization of the high school situation in the district appears to be inevitable, sooner or later. Frank Maddock school in Drayton Valley is the only school over a wide area that specializes solely in senior high education: it is of a size where a wide range of programs can be offered in a well-equipped setting. It has the capacity to serve greater numbers over a wider area and could constitute an option for Alder Flats/Buck Lake residents if the area happened to lie within the jurisdiction of a new school authority.

It is known that residents of the area are presently in something of a quandary as to what local government arrangement, covering municipal and education functions, might best serve their interests. They are wrestling with three main choices in terms of a suitable local government centre: Wetaskiwin, the present county seat well to the east; Rocky Mountain House, a lesser distance to the south through undeveloped tracts of land, but over a road that is soon to be completely paved; and Drayton Valley, the closest centre over a paved highway and through continuous agricultural settlement. According to recent surveys the popular majority preference is for incorporation into the M.D. of Clearwater based in Rocky Mountain House, with the minority equally split between the other two centres. Whatever the jurisdiction the area would be on the 'periphery' and could possibly be vulnerable to the preferences of more centrally-located and more heavily-populated areas. Of particular concern would be how the area would be treated in terms of education services, and how far the existing local schooling pattern could be maintained.

6.5.2. Diminution Generalities and Financial Impact:

Information on how Wetaskiwin County might be affected, if it lost its west-end to a new Drayton Valley-centred unit, is presented in Table 6-9. The area currently accounts for about 11% of the system enrolment and 11.5% of the capacity. L.B.I. assessment would be reduced by a lesser percentage, but there would be a significantly greater reduction in the E.P./P.-L. assessment available to the system. On the assumption that system net costs might be reduced by a slightly greater percentage (12.5%) than the reduction in enrolment, it was calculated that the diminished county school system would probably be faced with slightly decreased school tax rates on both major categories of property (L.B.I. and E.P./P.-L.). Urban beneficiaries would include the Town of Millet and several summer villages. The diminished system would also emerge with a marginally improved capacity utilization factor, up from 76.5% to 77.1%.

Under Options E/F and G/H the current taxpayers in the west end of Wetaskiwin would face the prospect of a 10% to 15% reduction in the rate of school taxation, based on the 1984 situation. Similar levels of reduction could probably be anticipated if the area was incorporated into the Rocky Mountain School Division No. 15. It is believed that this latter option has a particular attraction for area residents since it is the one least likely to result in a loss of local provision of a high school education: it is feared that continuance of the status quo, or a connection to Drayton Valley, might result in some centralization, outside the local area, of at least senior high education.

6.6. Rocky Mountain School Division:

Under Options E/F and G/H it is envisaged that the small piece of the M.D. of Clearwater, adjacent to the west end of Wetaskiwin County, would be located within a new school authority. The area is presently 'unorganized' for school purposes. However, because it lies within the M.D. of Clearwater, and since this is the site municipality for E.P./P.-L. assessment apportioned to the Rocky Mountain School Division, a re-drawing of rural municipal boundaries would affect this school jurisdiction. It is considered that the effect would be almost negligible, involving a miniscule increase in the applicable tax rates. The pattern of change would be roughly similar to that experienced by the Yellowhead School Division under the 'minimal' scenario but the magnitude of the change would be much less.

6.7. A Drayton Valley Area School System:

6.7.1. Options and Base Data:

The schools and school attendance areas within each configuration option were enumerated in the introduction to this section (p. 6-6). The relevant base data for the four main configurations are presented in Table 6-10. Option A/B is a minimal disruption scenario affecting only the Parkland County school system. Option C/D adds in small areas involving minor impacts on the Yellowhead and Leduc County school systems. Option E/F would entail major impacts on these systems and, additionally, the Wetaskiwin County school system and Rocky Mountain School Division (though the latter to only a very small extent). Option G/H would continue this pattern of impact and extend it to encompass the Chip Lake area of I.D. 14 (Yellowhead S.D.) and the Moon-Lake Magnolia areas of Parkland County.

In every case the main public system would be supplemented by the small Drayton Valley-centred separate school system, and possibly by the tiny, but almost defunct, Tomahawk R.C. system (Map 2-3). These separate systems would have a small claim on the assessment base and E.P./P.-L. tax contributions that would otherwise be attributable to the main public system. These claims have been ignored in the calculations undertaken here.

6.7.2. Projected Financial Implications:

The main assumption made in constructing hypothetical 1984 Schedule 12 supplementary requisitions for the various options related to the rate of supplementary requisition per student. In 1984 the rate for the existing systems fell into a fairly narrow range and averaged a little over $1200 per student. For the purpose of the present calculations a rate of $1350 has been selected in part to allow for the effects of generally above average unit costs in what would be a comparatively small system with a fairly scattered student population. The level also provides some cushion for extraordinary start-up costs, and helps to ensure the maintenance of an above average school system in terms of the quality of the education service delivered. Finally, the heightened level should provide in the long-term for the accumulation of sufficient reserves to offset any major future changes in the education finance regime, and to help cope with reductions in assessment associated with the gradual decline of conventional oil and gas production from the area.

The (equalized) mill rate patterns associated with each option are summarized in Table 6-II, which provides for a variety of comparisons including the rates for the diminished jurisdictions. Individual urban cases are also detailed.

With regard first of all to the four main options, the rates are lowest for the C/D configuration and highest for the A/B configuration. The latter rates, for both L.B.I. and E.P./P.-L., are still roughly similar to comparable rates in existing system. The option C/D rates are easily the lowest rates indicated on the table. In general therefore the various options studied hold out the prospect of at least similar school tax rates to those now in effect, with the probability of various degrees of reduced rates depending on the configuration. In these particular cases the rate reductions are mostly at the expense of increases in the rates experienced by Yellowhead system supporters. It may indeed be difficult to justify creating such a small school system as C/D when it would be associated with windfall benefits for comparatively few at the possible additional expense for a comparatively large number of taxpayers elsewhere.

From the perspective of E.P./P.-L. taxpayers, those properties now located within I.D. 14, if incorporated within new municipal boundaries, would experience a major decrease in school taxation (from rates in the low 30's to rates around 20). Such taxpayers in other jurisdictions would also benefit through lower tax rates by inclusion in any new arrangement, though the extent of the reduction would be modest in comparison with that to be experienced by benefitting I.D. 14 properties.

In general any of the urban municipalities that might be incorporated in a new system could look to reduced rates of supplementary school requisitions. This is particularly apparent in the case of the Town of Drayton Valley for anything other than the A/B option. Note also the contrast for the Villages of Evansburg and Wildwood between the E/F (intermediate) and G/H (maximum) options. This contrast would also apply to L.B.I. taxpayers currently resident in the Chip Lake area of I.D. 14. Similarly, the Village of Breton would experience an increased rate under the 'lesser' scenario (Option C/D), but significantly reduced rates under options E/F and G/H.

Comparative statistics on the various options, in relation to the 4-system average developed from Table 6-1, are presented in Table 12. Some financial profile estimates have been included, but these are somewhat impressionistic, having been developed mainly to obtain an indication of comparative expenditure effort. In general it is assumed that the main revenue source, the S.F.P.F. grant, will be close to, but somewhat less than, the average in $ per student terms (on account of the comparative property tax base wealth of the new system), whatever the configuration. The grant is mainly sensitive to student numbers. Other education grants to the system are expected to be well below the average because of the stronger influence of assessment base equalization factors (i.e. at a gross rate of around $250 per student, rather than the average rate of around $365). The supplementary requisition rate per student has been assumed to be well above the average, for the reasons indicated earlier. It is reckoned that the system operating expenditures would have amounted to around $4,000 per student in 1984, which is fairly similar to the Yellowhead system (Table 6-1). This rate has been used to round out the information presented in Table 6-12.

6.7.3. Summary Observations:

If based on either the A/B or C/D configurations the new school system would be rather small, and almost hardly worth creating. Option E/F would represent a system roughly similar in scale to the present Wetaskiwin system, while Option G/H, in numbers terms, would be comparable to the diminished Leduc County system. Whatever the configuration the system utilization capacity would be somewhat below average.

In fiscal capacity terms the system would rate as well above the average mainly on the strength of the considerable endowment of E.P. and P.-L. assessment. The latter would account for around half of the total base, in contrast to an average level of around 30%. Mainly because of this fact the new system would be characterized by disturbingly low expenditure effort levels. This suggests the potential for considerable "wastage" of existing E.P./P.-L. assessment, especially in the case of Option C/D.

TABLE 6-1: SCHOOL SYSTEMS: SELECTED COMPARATIVE DATA, 1984

	Parkland County #31	Leduc County #25	Wetaskiwin County #10	Yellowhead S.D. #12
Number of Students (Sept. 1984)	10,385	5,050/3,778[1]	2,164	4,998
Non-E.P./P.L. Eq. Assessment (per student)	$347,741,690 ($33,485)	$166,262,550 ($44,008)	$92,460,000 ($42,726)	$198,186,010 ($39,653)
E.P. and P.L. Eq. Assessment (per student)	$186,612,950 ($17,969)	$52,108,190 ($13,793)	$22,322,190 ($10,315)	$70,466,137 ($14,099)
Total Eq. Ass. Base of System (per student)	$534,354,640 ($51,454)	$218,370,740 ($57,801)	$114,782,190 ($53,042)	$268,652,147 ($53,752)
E.P./P.L. Ass. as % of Total Ass.	34.9%	23.9%	19.4%	26.2%
Total Operating Expenditures (per student)	$44,677,527 ($4,302)	$21,669,187 ($4,290)	$9,308,811 ($4,302)	$20,161,788 ($4,034)
Expenditure Effort (per $1000 Eq. Ass.)	$83.6	$99.2	$81.1	$75.0
Surplus/(Deficit) (per student)	($258,783) ($25)	($537,491) ($106)	($43,773) ($20)	($76,877) ($15)
Conditional Transfers Revenue: Grand Total (per student)	$42,241,003 ($4,068)	$18,884,917 ($3,739)	$8,322,421 ($3,846)	$19,578,907 ($3,917)
S.F.P.F. Transfer Component (per student)	$25,991,406 ($2,503)	$12,136,734 ($2,403)	$5,001,451 ($2,311)	$11,464,925 ($2,294)
S.F.P.F. revenue as % of total op. expendits.	58.2%	56.0%	53.7%	56.9%
Supplementary Requisitions (per student)	$12,344,831 ($1,189)	$4,863,928 ($1,287)	$2,622,455 ($1,212)	$6,208,025 ($1,242)
Supp. Req. as % of total op. expendits.	27.6%	22.4%	28.2%	30.8%
Pipe and Power Tax contribution (as a % of total Supp. Req.)	$4,386,070 (35.5%)	$1,125,444 (23.1%)	$510,001 (19.5%)	$2,249,575 (36.2%)
Transfers other than Supp. Req. or S.F.P.F. (per student)	$3,904,766 ($376)	$1,884,255 ($373)	$698,515 ($322)	$1,905,957 ($381)
Equalized Mill Rate for Supp. Req.:				
a) Lands, Buildings and Improvements	22.9	22.5	22.9	20.0
b) E.P./P.L.	23.5	21.6	22.9	30.5 (I.D. 15)

SOURCES: Ass. Eq. Board Synopsis; 1984 Financial Statements; School Buildings Branch, Alberta Education; and calculations (of the aggregated mill rate) by staff of the Policy and Research Section, Alberta Municipal Affairs.

[1] Actual Sept. 1984 figure = 3,778, but the county school system serviced City of Leduc students for the first half of 1984. 5050 is a compromise between the Sept. 83 and Sept. 84 county enrolments. The 5050 figure is used for the calculation of expenditure and revenue statistics; the 3778 figure is used for the fiscal capacity statistics.

TABLE 6-2 SCHOOLS WITHIN, OR SERVING PARTS OF, THE STUDY AREAS

Page 1 of 5

COUNTY OF PARKLAND NO. 31: TOTAL SYSTEM ENROLMENT (SEPT. 1984) = 10,385; PRESENT SYSTEM UTILIZATION CAPACITY: 82.6%

School	Building History Year Built	Building History Capacity Effect	Total Capacity	Enrolment (Sept. 1984)	% Capacity Utilization	% System Enrolment	Proposed Capital Projects Details	Proposed Capital Projects Capacity Change
ELDORADO (D.V.)			500	404	80.8	3.9	-	-
Teacher Count: 24	1947	50						
Grades 1-3	1954	50						
	1955	275						
	1957	25						
	1958	50						
	1967 (P)	50						
FRANK MADDOCK (D.V.)			740	466	63.0	4.5	-	-
Teacher Count: 27	1971	430						
Grades 10-12	1977	200						
Evening Credit	1982	110						
DRAYTON VALLEY "B"			400	354	88.5	3.4	-	-
Teacher Count: 19	1962	150						
Grades 4-6	1963	150						
Elementary Spec. Educ.	1973 (P)	100						
	1983	0						
ENTWISTLE			275	207	75.3	2.0	-	-
Teacher Count: 13	1956	75						
Grades K-9	1958	0						
Early Childhood Services	1961	50						
Elementary Spec. Educ.	1966	100						
	1978 (P)	50						
	1982	0						
	1983	0						
H.W. PICKUP (D.V.)			475	374	78.7	3.6	1984 Modernization of I. A. (655.4 sq.m.)	0
Teacher Count: 21	1959	125						
Grades 7-9	1960	150						
J.H. Spec. Educ.	1971	60					1984 Modernization (2002 sq.m.)	0
	1980 (P)	50						
	1981 (P)	50						

COUNTY OF PARKLAND NO. 31 (Continued):

Page 2 of 5

School	Building History		Total Capacity	Enrolment (Sept. 1984)	% Capacity Utilization	% System Enrolment	Proposed Capital Projects	
	Year Built	Capacity Effect					Details	Capacity Change
H.W. PICKUP (D.V.)								
	1982	0						
	1982	40						
SEBA BEACH			435	265	60.9	2.6	-	-
Teacher Count: 21	1953	150						
Grades K-12	1957	135						
Early Childhood Services	1963	25						
Evening Credit	1964 (P)	25						
Elem. Spec. Educ.	1977 (P)	100						
	1980	0						
	1983	0						
	1984	0						
TOMAHAWK			175	127	72.6	1.2	-	-
Teacher Count: 7	1947	50						
Grades K-9	1954	50						
Early Childhood Services	1958	25						
Elem. Spec. Educ.	1963	50						
J.H. Spec. Educ.	1982	0						
ALL STUDY AREA SCHOOLS (PARKLAND)			3000	2197	73.2	21.2%		

DRAYTON VALLEY R.C.S.S.D. NO. 111: Total System Enrolment (Sept. 1984) = 386; Present System Utilization = 81.3%

School	Year Built	Capacity Effect	Total Capacity	Enrolment (Sept. 1984)	% Capacity Utilization	% System Enrolment	Details	Capacity Change
ST. ANTHONY'S (D.V.)			500	386	81.3	100.0		
Teacher Count: 21	1964	275						
Grades K-9	1967	150						
Early Childhood Services	1970	75						
Elem. Spec. Educ.								

YELLOWHEAD S.D.: NO. 12: Total System Enrolment (Sept. 1984) = 4,998; Present System Utilization: 75.9%

Page 3 of 5

School	Building History Year Built	 Capacity Effect	Total Capacity	Enrolment (Sept. 1984)	% Capacity Utilization	% System Enrolment	Proposed Capital Projects Details	 Capacity Change
EVANSVIEW (Evansburg)			250	168	67.2	3.4	-	-
Teacher Count: 12	1961	125						
Grades K-6	1964	125						
Early Childhood Services	1982	0						
Elem. Spec. Educ.								
GRAND TRUNK (Evansburg)			530	292	55.1	5.8	-	-
Teacher Count: 19	1971	530						
Grades 7-12								
NITON CENTRAL			350	331	94.6	6.6	1985: Addition (920 sq.m.)	+50
Teacher Count: 18	1952	75					1985: Moderniz.(2116 sq.m.)	+50
Grades K-12	1955	125						
Early Childhood Services	1957	0						
	1966	125						
	1972	0						
	1978	0						
	1981 (P)	25						
WILDWOOD			325	243	74.8	4.9	1985: Addition (920 sq.m.)	+50
Teacher Count: 15	1949	75					1985: Moderniz.(1530 sq.m.)	-25
Grades K-9	1956	100						
Early Childhood Services	1958	0						
	1963	150						
ALL STUDY AREA SCHOOLS (YELLOWHEAD)			1455	1034	71.1%	20.7%		

COUNTY OF LEDUC NO. 25: Total System Enrolment (Sept. 1984) = 3,778; Present System Utilization = 77.0%

School	Year Built	Capacity Effect	Total Capacity	Enrolment (Sept. 1984)	% Capacity Utilization	% System Enrolment	Details	Capacity Change
LINDALE			125	119	95.2	3.1		
Teacher Count: 7	1949	50						
Grades K-9	1952	25						
Early Childhood Services	1956	50						
Elem. Spec. Educ.	1964	0						

COUNTY OF LEDUC NO. 25 (Continued):

School	Building History Year Built	Capacity Effect	Total Capacity	Enrolment (Sept. 1984)	% Capacity Utilization	% System Enrolment	Proposed Capital Projects Details	Capacity Change
BRETON ELEMENTARY								
Teacher Count: 11	1947	50	250	181	72.4	4.8	-	-
Grades K-6	1952	25						
Early Childhood Services	1953	50						
Elem. Spec. Educ.	1966	100						
	1981	50						
BRETON HIGH								
Teacher Count: 12	1955	75	340	176	51.8	4.7		
Grades 7-12	1958	75						
	1964	120						
	1967	70						
ALL STUDY AREA SCHOOLS (LEDUC)			765	476	62.2	12.6		
COUNTY OF WETASKIWIN NO. 10: Total System Enrolment (Sept. 1984) = 2,164; Present System Utilization 76.5%								
ALDER FLATS								
Teacher Count: 10	1948	100	225	142	63.1	6.7	-	-
Grades 5-12	1954	25						
Elem. Spec. Educ.	1958	75						
	1965	0						
	19?	25						
BUCK LAKE								
Teacher Count: 5	1940	50	100	92	92.0	4.3	-	-
Grades 1-4	1960	50						
	1976	0						

COUNTY OF WETASKIWIN NO. 10 (Continued):

School	Building History Year Built	Building History Capacity Effect	Total Capacity	Enrolment (Sept. 1984)	% Capacity Utilization	% System Enrolment	Proposed Capital Projects Details	Proposed Capital Projects Capacity Change
WINFIELD			440	230	52.3	10.6		
Teacher Count: 15	1950	50						
Grades 1-12	1953	100						
Elem. Spec. Educ.	1956	140						
J.H. Spec. Educ.	1965	100						
	1967	0						
	1971	50						
ALL STUDY AREA SCHOOLS (WETASKIWIN)			765	464	60.7	21.4%	-	-

N.B. (P) = Portable

Sources: Alberta Education, School Buildings Branch;
Alberta Education, List of Operating Schools in Alberta, 1984-85 School Year.

TABLE 6-3: PARKLAND COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM: COMPARISON FACTORS (1984)

	Actual System	Diminished D.V. Area	% Change	Diminished D.V. Area + Moon Lake -Magnolia	% Change
Student Enrolment	10,385	8,660[1]	(-16.6)	8,453[2]	(-18.6)
System Capacity	12,573	10,283[1]	(-18.2)	10,008[2]	(-20.4)
Lands, Buildings, Improvements Eq. Ass.					
a) Parkland County	186,816,490	163,394,685[3]	(-12.5)	160,903,598[3]	(-13.9)
b) Town of Drayton Valley	28,401,690	—[4]	(n.a.)	—[4]	(n.a.)
c) Village of Entwistle	2,861,510	2,861,510	(0)	—[4]	(n.a.)
d) Other Urbans	129,373,670	129,373,670	(0)	129,373,670	(0)
e) I.D. 14	288,330	—		—	
Sub-total L.B.I.	347,741,690	295,629,865	(-15.0)	290,277,268	(-16.5)
E.P. and P-L Eq. Ass.	186,612,950	135,294,389[5]	(-27.5)	134,247,444[5]	(-28.1)
Grand Total Eq. Ass.	534,354,640	430,924,254	(-19.4)	424,524,712	(-20.6)
Supplem. Requisitions	$12,344,831	$9,875,865[6]	(-20.0)	$9,628,968[7]	(-22.0)

---

[1] Excludes all the Drayton Valley schools and Tomahawk school.
[2] Additional exclusion of Entwistle school.
[3] Reductions based on estimate of L.B.I. losses (see Table 5-1).
[4] Assumed to be supporter of a Drayton Valley Area school authority.
[5] Reductions based on estimates derived from Table 5-1. (Ignores the negligible P.C.S.S. credits.)
[6] Based on an assumed 20% reduction in system net costs.
[7] Based on an assumed 22% reduction in system net costs.

TABLE 6-4: PARKLAND COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM: IMPACT ASSESSMENT SUMMARY STATISTICS (1984)

	Actual System	Diminished D.V. Area Only	% Change	Diminished D.V. Area + Moon Lake -Magnolia	% Change
Utilization Capacity	82.6	84.2	(+1.9)	84.5	(+2.3)
Schedule 12 Mill Rate	35.5	33.4	(-5.3)	33.2	(-6.5)
Aggregate Mill Rate	23.1	22.9	(-0.9)	22.7	(-1.7)
i) L.B.I.	22.9	22.9	(0.0)	22.7	(-0.9)
ii) E.P. - P-L	23.5	22.9	(-2.6)	22.7	(-3.4)
Requisition Amounts: (and effective eq. mill rate)					
Parkland County	8,652,050 (L.B.I.) (22.9) (E.P.P.L.) (23.5)	6,845,318 (L.B.I.) (22.9) (E.P.P.L.) (22.9)	(-20.9) (0)	6,694,545 (L.B.I.) (22.7) (E.P.P.L.) (22.7)	(-22.6) (-0.9) (-3.4)
Town of Drayton Valley	650,028 (22.9)	[Option A/B 639,469 (22.5)	(-2.6)]	[Option G/H 572,393 (20.2)	(-11.8)]
Village of Entwistle	65,491 (22.9)	65,551 (22.9)	(0)	[Option G/H 57,670 (20.2)	(-11.8)]
Other Urbans	2,977,262 (22.9)	2,964,970 (22.9)	(0)	2,934,423 (22.7)	(-1.4) (-0.9)

TABLE 6-5: YELLOWHEAD SCHOOL DIVISION: COMPARISON FACTORS (1984)

	Actual System	Diminished Minimal	% Change	Diminished Intermediate	% Change	Diminished Maximum	% Change
Student Enrolment	4,998	4,988	(0)	4,998	(0)	4,295[1]	(-14.1)
System Capacity	6,585	6,585	(0)	6,585	(0)	5,480[1]	(-16.8)
Lands, Buildings, Improvements Eq. Ass.							
a) I.D. 14	92,019,960	92,019,960	(0)	82,959,558[2]	(-9.8)	70,504,131[2]	(-23.4)
b) I.D. 15	65,580	65,580	(0)	65,580	(0)	65,580	(0)
c) Hinton/Edson	99,388,040	99,388,040	(0)	99,388,040	(0)	99,388,040	(0)
d) Evansburg/Wildwood	6,712,160	6,712,160	(0)	6,712,160	(0)	—[3]	(n.a.)
Sub-total L.B.I.	198,185,740	198,185,740	(0)	189,125,338	(-4.6)	169,957,751	(-14.2)
Supplem. Requisitions	6,208,025	6,208,025	(0)	6,208,025	(0)	5,276,821[4]	(-15.0)
Ramsay Formula Calculations							
Supplem. Requisitions:							
i) Yellowhead System	6,208,025	6,208,025		6,208,025		5,276,821	
ii) Other Systems	20,120,625	20,120,625		20,120,625		20,120,625	
Total Supp. Req.	26,328,650	26,328,650		26,328,650		25,397,446	
Eq. Assessment (L.B.I.)							
i) Yellowhead System	199,135,920	199,135,920		190,075,518		177,620,091	
ii) Other Systems	559,517,750	559,517,750		559,517,750		559,517,750	
Total Eq. Ass. (L.B.I.)	758,653,670	758,653,670	(0)	749,593,268	(-1.2)	737,137,841	(-2.8)
E.P./P.-L. Eq. Ass. (I.D. 14)	73,707,570	65,604,855	(-11.0)	51,267,099	(-30.0)	46,032,366	(-37.5)
Total Equalized Ass.	832,361,240	824,258,525	(-1.0)	800,860,367	(-3.8)	783,170,207	(-5.9)
Mill Rate applicable E.P./P.-L.	31.6	31.9		32.9		32.4	
E.P./P.-L. taxes to be raised	2,331,465	2,095,565		1,685,432		1,492,785	
Yellowhead System Credits (97.661%)	2,276,932	2,046,550		1,646,009		1,457,869	

[1] Excludes: Wildwood, Evansview, and Grand Trunk schools now in the Yellowhead S.D. (see Table 6-2).
[2] Reductions based on estimates of L.B.I. losses associated with the net 'intermediate' and 'maximum' areas (see Table 5-1).
[3] Villages of Evansburg and Wildwood assumed to be supporters of a Drayton Valley Area school authority.
[4] Based on an assumed 15% reduction on account of similar magnitude of reduction in the students in the system.

TABLE 6-6: YELLOWHEAD SCHOOL SYSTEM: IMPACT ASSESSMENT SUMMARY STATISTICS (1984)

	Actual System	Diminished Minimal	% Change	Diminished Intermediate	% Change	Diminished Maximum	% Change
Utilization Capacity (%)	75.9	75.9	(0)	75.9	(0)	78.4	(+3.3)
Schedule 12 Mill Rate	31.3	31.3	(0)	32.8	(+4.8)	31.0	(-0.9)
L.B.I. Rate	20.0	21.0	(+5.0)	24.1	(+20.5)	22.5	(+12.5)
E.P.-P.L. Rate	31.6	31.9	(+1.0)	32.9	(+4.1)	32.4	(+2.5)
Requisition Amounts:							
I.D. 14	$4,086,718	$3,978,769	(-2.6)	$3,647,130	(-10.8)	$3,041,918	(-25.6)
Hinton	$1,251,523	$1,315,713	(+5.0)	$1,511,450	(+20.5)	$1,407,958	(+12.5)
Edson	$ 733,596	$ 771,221	(+5.0)	$ 885,954	(+20.5)	$ 825,291	(+12.5)
Evansburg	$ 91,990	$ 96,708	(+5.0)	$ 111,096	(+20.5)	$ 92,034	(+0.01)
Wildwood	$ 42,074	$ 44,232	(+5.0)	$ 50,813	(+20.5)	$ 42,552	(+0.01)
						OPTION G/H	

TABLE 6-7: LEDUC COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM: COMPARISON FACTORS (1984)

	Actual System	Diminished Lesser	% Change	Diminished Greater	% Change
Student Enrolment	3,778	3,778	(0)	3,302[1]	(-12.6)
System Capacity	4,906	4,906	(0)	4,191[1]	(-14.6)
Lands, Buildings Improvements Eq. Ass.					
a) Leduc County	122,508,420	118,311,363[2]	(-3.4)	111,181,099[2]	(-9.2)
b) Village of Breton	2,488,210	2,488,210	(0)	—[3]	(n.a.)
c) other urbans	41,265,920	41,265,920	(0)	41,265,920	(0)
Sub-total L.B.I.	166,262,550	162,065,493	(-2.5)	152,447,019	(-8.3)
E.P. and P-L Eq. Ass.	52,108,190	42,989,257[4]	(-17.5)	29,701,668[4]	(-43.0)
GRAND TOTAL Eq. Ass.	218,370,740	205,054,750	(-6.1)	182,148,687	(-16.6)
Supplem. Requisitions	4,863,928	4,739,453[5]	(-2.5)	4,012,741[6]	(-17.5)

[1] Excludes the school at Lindale and the two Breton schools (see Table 6-2).

[2] Reductions based on estimates of L.B.I. losses associated with the net 'lesser' and 'greater' areas (see Table 5-1).

[3] Village of Breton assumed to be a supporter of a Drayton Valley Area school authority.

[4] Reductions based on estimates of E.P. and P-L losses associated with the various net scenario areas, i.e. 'lesser net' = ('greater' - 'lesser'). (Ignores R.C.S.S. system credits as neglibible.)

[5] Actual requisition reduced by $124,475, this being the transfer from the Leduc County school authority to the Parkland County school authority (Schedule 4, Financial Statement).

[6] Based on an assumed 17.5% reduction in system net costs if system diminished.

TABLE 6-8: LEDUC COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM: IMPACT ASSESSMENT SUMMARY STATISTICS (1984)

	Actual System	Diminished Lesser	% Change		Diminished Greater	% Change
Utilization Capacity (%)	77.0	77.0	(0)		78.8	(+2.3)
Schedule 12 Mill Rate	29.3	29.2	(0.0)		26.3	(-10.0)
Aggregate Mill Rate	22.3	23.1	(+3.8)		22.0	(-1.1)
i) Lands, Buildings, Improvements	22.5	23.1	(+2.7)		22.0	(-2.2)
ii) E.P. and P.-L.	21.6	23.1	(+6.9)		22.0	(+1.9)
Requisition Amounts:						
Leduc County	$3,880,097	$3,728,159	(-3.9)		$3,103,651	(-20.0)
Village of Breton	$ 55,948	$ 57,510	(+2.7)	Option E/F Option G/H	$48,022 $50,262	(-14.2) (-10.2)
Other Urbans	$ 927,883	$ 953,784	(+2.7)		$909,090	(-2.2)

TABLE 6-9: WETASKIWIN COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM: COMPARISON FACTORS AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT SUMMARY STATISTICS (1984)

	Actual System	Diminished System	% Change
Student Enrolment	2164	1930[1]	-10.8
System Capacity	2829	2504[1]	-11.5
Lands, Buildings & Improvements Eq. Ass.			
i) Wetaskiwin County	$ 71,838,750	$ 65,984,013[2]	- 8.1
ii) Urbans	$ 20,621,250[3]	$ 20,621,250[3]	0
TOTAL L.B.I.	$ 92,460,000	$ 86,605,263	- 6.3
E.P. and P.-L. Eq. Ass.	$ 22,322,190	$ 16,406,810[2]	-26.5
GRAND TOTAL EQ. ASS.	$114,782,190	$103,012,073	-10.3
Net Costs/Supp. Req.	$ 2,622,455	$ 2,294,648[4]	-12.5
System Utilization Capacity (%)	76.5	77.1	+ 0.8
System Mill Rate (Sched. 12)	28.4	26.5	- 6.6
Aggregate Mill Rate	22.9	22.3	- 2.5
i) L.B.I. Rate	22.9	22.3	- 2.5
ii) E.P./P.-L. Rate	22.9	22.3	- 2.5

[1] Excludes the Alder Flats and Buck Lake schools.
[2] Based on estimates derived from Tables 4-2 and 5-1.
[3] Town of Millet, and the S.V.'s of Ma-Me-O Beach, Poplar Bay, Grandview, Silver Beach, Crystal Springs, and Argentia Beach.
[4] Assumed as being 82.5% of the actual.

SOURCES: Tables 6-1, 6-2, 4-2 and 5-1.

TABLE 6-10: DRAYTON VALLEY AREA SCHOOL SYSTEM: BASE DATA (1984)

	Students			Equalized Assessment		
OPTIONS	Enrolment	Capacity	(Util. Cap. Percentage)	L.B.I.[1]	E.P./P.-L.[2]	Total
A/B (D.V. area of Parkland + Town of D.V. + I.D. 14 'island)	1725	2290	(75.3)	52,111,825	51,318,561	103,430,386
C/D (D.V. area of Parkland and Leduc (lesser) + Town of D.V. + I.D. 14 (minimal))	1725	2290	(75.3)	61,047,990	68,545,959	129,593,949
E/F (D.V. area of Parkland + Leduc (Greater) + Town of D.V. + I.D. 14 (Intermediate) + Wetask. + Clearwater + Vill. of Breton)	2423	3380	(71.7)	86,223,808	106,238,063	192,461,871
G/H (D.V. and Moon L-Magnolia areas of Parkland + Leduc (Greater) + I.D. 14 (maximum) + Wetask. + Clearwater + Town of D.V. + Villages of Breton, Evansburg, Entwistle and Wildwood)	3333	4760	(70.0)	110,743,992	112,519,741	223,263,733

Sources: Table 6-2, and calculations based on Tables 5-1 and 5-2.

1 L.B.I. = Lands, Buildings and Improvements, excluding pipe-lines and power-lines.
2 E.P./P.-L. = Electric Power and Pipe-line Assessment.

TABLE 6-11: DRAYTON VALLEY AREA SCHOOL SYSTEM COMBINATIONS: Mill Rate Comparisons

Current Systems	Existing System	Diminished Configurations			D.V. Area School System Configuration Options			
Parkland County:		(D.V. area only)	(D.V. area + Moon L.-Magn.)		A/B	C/D	E/F	G/H
E.P. P.-L.	23.5	22.9	22.7		22.5	18.0	19.3	20.2
L.B.I.	22.9	22.9	22.7		22.5	18.0	19.3	20.2
Town of Drayton Valley	22.9	22.5/18.0/19.3	20.2		22.5	18.0	19.3	20.2
Village of Entwistle	22.9	22.9	20.2		22.9	22.9	22.9	20.2
Yellowhead S.D.:		(Minimal)	(Intermediate)	(Maximum)				
E.P. P.-L.	31.6	31.9	32.9	32.4	22.5	18.0	19.3	20.2
L.B.I.	20.0	21.0	24.1	22.5	22.5	18.0	19.3	20.2
Village of Evansburg	20.0	21.0	24.1	20.2	20.0	21.0	24.1	20.2
Village of Wildwood	20.0	21.0	24.1	20.2	20.0	21.0	24.1	20.2
Leduc County:		(Lesser)	(Greater)					
E.P. P.-L.	21.6	23.1	22.0		22.5	18.0	19.3	20.2
L.B.I.	22.5	23.1	22.0		22.5	18.0	19.3	20.2
Village of Breton	22.5	23.1	19.3/20.2		22.5	23.1	19.3	20.2
Wetaskiwin Co.:								
E.P. P.-L.	22.9	22.3			22.9	22.9	19.3	20.2
L.B.I.	22.9	22.3			22.9	22.9	19.3	20.2

SOURCES: Tables 6-4, 6-6, 6-8 and 6-9.

TABLE 6-12: DRAYTON VALLEY AREA SCHOOL SYSTEM CONFIGURATIONS: COMPARATIVE STATISTICS

	OPTION A/B	OPTION C/D	OPTION E/F	OPTION G/H	4 SYSTEM AVERAGE
Number of Students	1725	1725	2423	3333	5331
System Utilization Capacity (%)	75.3	75.3	71.7	70.0	78.0
Lands, Buildings & Improvements Eq. Ass. (per student)	$30,210	$35,390	$35,586	$33,227	$37,333
E.P./P.-L. Eq. Ass. (per student)	$29,750	$39,737	$43,846	$33,759	$15,546
Total Eq. Ass. (per student)	$59,960	$75,127	$79,431	$66,985	$52,879
E.P./P.-L. Ass. as % of total ass.	49.6%	52.9%	55.2%	50.4%	29.4%
Total Operating Expenditures (per student)	$ 4,000	$ 4,000	$ 4,000	$ 4,000	$ 4,232
Expenditure Effort (per $1000 Eq. Ass.)	$ 66.7	$ 53.2	$ 50.4	$ 59.7	$ 84.7
Conditional Transfers Rev. (per student)	$ 3,850	$ 3,850	$ 3,850	$ 3,850	$ 3,892
S.F.P.F. Transfer Component (per student)	$ 2,250	$ 2,250	$ 2,250	$ 2,250	$ 2,377
S.F.P.F. revenue as % of total op. exp.	56.3	56.3	56.3	56.3	56.2
Supplementary Requisitions (per student)	$ 1,350 (est.)	$ 1,350 (est.)	$ 1,350 (est.)	$ 1,350 (est.)	$ 1,232
Supplementary Requisitions as % of total op. expendits.	33.8	33.8	33.8	33.8	27.3
Pipe and Power Tax contribution (as % of total Supp. Req.)	68.7%	67.7%	65.7%	61.6%	28.6
Transfers other than Supp. Req. or S.F.P.F. (per student)	$ 250	$ 250	$ 250	$ 250	$ 363
Equalized Mill Rates for Supp. Req.					
a) L.B.I.	22.5	18.0	19.3	20.2	22.1
b) E.P./P.-L.	22.5	18.0	19.3	20.2	24.6

7. CONCLUDING OVERVIEW:

7.1. Historical Perspectives:

The current campaign for more direct and more localized local government in the Drayton Valley area is believed to be probably the fourth such campaign in the area's modern history, i.e. since the Pembina oil field was discovered in 1953. It is a long-standing contentious issue which, clearly, has been only temporarily subdued by measures introduced in response to previous campaigns: the issue has never really been finally resolved, or it would not keep surfacing in the way it has. The fact remains however that previous campaigns have been unsuccessful, despite substantial petitions (1400 signatories during the last campaign in the early 1970's).

Current campaigners - the Yes Group: Western Ratepayers - are claiming 'overwhelming support' for a new county of their own. This was probably claimed in the course of earlier campaigns but again it must be noted that these failed for some reason or the other. Therefore, while this study has indicated that a new local government is highly feasible on financial grounds, and could be formed at no great hardship to the local authorities currently responsible for the area, it must be questioned if a new county is politically feasible. Is there a mutually-trustful, coherent, common-thinking, and unified community of people with the capability and the will to accept responsibility for locally governing themselves in a more direct manner than has been the case in the past? And, from a boundary perspective, assuming such a community does exist, where does it break down to be replaced by other community orientations?

In this context it may be useful to reflect on why previous campaigns may have failed. It is possible for instance that too great an area was targetted, encompassing districts with either strongly divided allegiances or openly hostile to inclusion in a local government centred in Drayton Valley. If this was the case there would have been interests actively undermining the efforts of campaigners for a new county. For example, public hearings by the Leslie Committee in December 1975 revealed considerable opposition to the idea by residents of the Chip Lake area of I.D. 14, Breton-Warburg in Leduc County, and Winfield in Wetaskiwin County. It is understood that the Wabamun Lake communities of Parkland County, such as Seba Beach and Betula Beach, were also hostile, feeling that they had nothing in common with the Drayton Valley area.

Perhaps the previous campaigns were too limited in their scope to traditionally rural interests and to traditional forms of government, overlooking the possibility of including urban interests. This limitation would result in a large body of indifferent opinion. The same type of limitation to mainly farming interests could have neutralized important economic interests in the oil and gas sector. It is this group which would basically 'bank-roll' a new local government in the Drayton Valley area.

Less than unanimous opinion within the core area of interest may also have undermined the earlier efforts. Splits here were probably between older settlers of the area, dating from the pre-oil era, and newer, more urbane, residents associated with the oil and gas development. In this respect it is significant that the area had been organized as an Improvement District, bordering the then M.D. of Stony

Plain. Until recently I.D.s were akin to being municipal wards of the provincial government. Their welfare had to be secured through various subsidies which, in an assessment-rich (but sparsely populated) area, usually translated into fairly good levels of service for relatively low levels of taxation. This tended to discourage older farming interests from pursuing local government incorporation, and this legacy may still be at work in the Drayton Valley area. The same sentiments probably still apply, with greater force, in the Chip Lake area of I.D. 14. For these reasons it is not surprising that the latter interests were opposed, in 1975, to incorporation into a Drayton Valley area county and, in 1976, to incorporation into Parkland County. The current trend however is towards the incorporation of I.D.s, such as I.D. 14, which can afford to govern themselves locally, and, more generally, there has been some movement towards a greater harmonization of municipal taxation and service levels as between incorporated and unincorporated rural areas.

There is also the possible reason that some of the earlier campaigners or supporters were simply playing the 'separation threat' game, to goad their councils into giving more attention to the west-ends. For instance, the petitioners of a decade ago were expressing the following concerns:

- general dissatisfaction with road conditions and with the administration of funds for road purposes.
- services being directed from County seats too far removed from the economic and cultural centre of the community they related to.

- . school boundaries being out-dated.
- . agricultural services inadequate.
- . lack of recreation facilities.

The previous campaign was in fact successful in mobilizing the county councils to act on some of these concerns, to the satisfaction at least of the Leslie Committee: the latter's members were so impressed that they withdrew an earlier recommendation favouring the creation of a new county, and replaced it with a recommendation to expand/extend the western areas of Parkland and Wetaskiwin Counties, and to leave the Leduc County boundary intact. Although the current campaigners do not appear to be simply threatening separation, and are more serious about actually wishing to govern themselves, it is possible that many of the residents are less committed to substantial change, and would be content to see service improvements within the existing familiar arrangements.

All of these matters would have to be addressed in any informal 'political feasibility' analysis, or a general 'warranting,' of the proposal for a new county. It should also be borne in mind that, over the long-term certainly, all three counties have served their west-ends well. Parkland County, to its credit, has gone to the extent of establishing a major sub-office in Drayton Valley. Although Leduc and Wetaskiwin County have not responded recently in such a major way there is the historical point that, before the discovery of oil in the western areas in the early 1950s, it was the rich farm assessment base in the eastern areas that helped to subsidize the developing western areas with their poorer soils. Certainly the east-ends have been compensated for their special or earlier efforts to service the west, through benefits conferred by the low-cost oil-patch industrial assessment base concentrated in the west. Can 'quits' be called? Would the eastern areas be better off now without their cantankerous west-ends, or would the integrity of the existing units be seriously impaired? The situation with respect to each jurisdiction is surveyed below.

7.2. The Impacted Jurisdictions:

7.2.1. Parkland County:

The county council presently numbers seven members, with three representatives - including the present reeve - coming from the west-end, three representatives from the east-end, and the seventh serving a central division. With the 1986 civic elections the council will increase to nine members, structured into four 'urban' divisions, around Spruce Grove/Stony Plain, and five rural divisions. Three of these will be in the west-end and the other two will be more centrally located, but will probably have closer ties to the east than the west (Map 7-1) (Table 7-1).

The new divisional structuring is of particular concern to the current Drayton Valley area representative, since it is expected to further shift the balance of power in the county to the semi-urban eastern areas. This could be to the detriment of the western area with its more rural orientation, its contrasting socio-economic profile, and its different development scenario. This councillor is therefore favourably disposed to more localized local government for the west end of Parkland County. This position is also attractive for the councillor currently representing the Magnolia-Moon Lake and Gainford-Seba Beach areas, who would be placed in even more of a minority position if the existing county was diminished by the Drayton Valley area only. This representative already finds county-wide planning controls, devised mainly to cope with situations in the more densely-developed east, to be overly rigid when applied in the much more rural western settings. It is also sensed by this representative that education costs are much higher than they need to be, because of the pandering to more lavish eastern tastes, and an aversion to greater privatization in areas such as student transportation.

The third west-end councillor is the present reeve. He is less fearful of the consequences of the new divisional structuring, and believes the west-end residents of the county have been equitably treated under the present arrangements, and have probably been relatively well served in comparison with western residents of the other counties. There is also apprehension about further reductions in Parkland given the recent experience of losses to the Village of Wabamun and the City of Edmonton. The reeve has also pointed out the difficulties experienced by the county in trying to deal fairly with the cost-sharing requests made by the main urban municipalities within its boundaries (Spruce Grove, Stony Plain and Drayton Valley). For example, the county cannot be as forthcoming as it might wish when dealing with what may appear to be a reasonable request from the Town of Drayton Valley if there is the possibility of thereby setting a precedent which could cost the county dearly if repeated in all the other urban cases.

If a new local government was created out of part of Parkland the diminished county would become more purely and more predominantly a semi-urban, rather than rural, municipality. Any remaining rural divisions would almost certainly be in a distinct minority situation, but most if not all would be quite conveniently located vis-a-vis the county seat in Stony Plain (compared with the existing west-end divisions) and would probably be well-satisfied with their circumstances in comparison with any other alternatives (e.g. joining another, more rural, rural municipality). The greatest dilemma would be generated for existing Division 5 (future Division 7) residents (Moon Lake-Magnolia-Gainford-Seba Beach), who may have to choose between one of at least three options: the status quo; an incorporated I.D. 14; or a new Drayton Valley area local government. A majority consensus is unlikely, suggesting the possible need for a sub-township survey of preferences prior to settling any boundaries in this area.

The existing council, while presently somewhat split on the issue, obviously includes a majority who would tend to favour the status quo, rather than see a separate Drayton Valley area unit. There is however a general awareness that the west-end will probably continue to be something of a large thorn in the side of the existing county, and that it will be increasingly difficult to deny the demands of westerners for more local democracy as the east continues to grow in significance and in its urban orientations. There may therefore be a resignation to let the west go and fend for itself (assuming this is the wish of a substantial majority of western residents), in the interests of a more homogeneous and harmonious Parkland County.

From a municipal operations perspective the loss of the west end would probably make for a more streamlined and rational Parkland unit, largely as a result of relief from the general 'doubling-up' of costs associated with the maintenance of the county's large sub-office operation (including public works shop and garage) in Drayton Valley. The diminished county would still have a considerable population base and this, in combination with the smaller area and the more compact shape, should assist the county in increasing operating efficiencies. These could help to avoid any increases in mill rate associated with the loss of a disproportionately large amount of assessment to the new unit.

The county would be relieved of the responsibility for future farmland-access roads in the still developing west-end, and would be spared the major expenses currently associated with maintaining county roads used heavily by oil-patch traffic (and, in the future, by trucks servicing forest-industry developments). However, apart from these special demands the west-end road network has not been nearly so expensive to maintain as that in the more densely developed east. If diminished there will be less western tax base to help subsidize the present relatively high eastern road standards. Road budgets will be squeezed, perhaps painfully, unless greater efficiencies can be realised. There appears to be a very high level of net expenditure per kilometer on eastern roads at the present time, and although the relatively high population densities help to explain this fact it is difficult to fully rationalize why the Parkland statistic is so far above the comparable statistic for Leduc County, another large rural municipality with a densely developed east-end (Table 4-9). There may therefore be scope for attaining greater efficiencies in this key service area.

Parkland County is presently unusual, in comparison with most rural municipalities, in its provision of policing and planning services on a full departmental basis. The police service in particular is somewhat controversial, being perceived by some as a luxury which the county can ill-afford or justify, especially when the free services of the R.C.M.P. are also present. Both services make most sense in relation to the more densely populated eastern areas, and it is possible that they will enjoy a greater measure of public acceptance in a diminished county setting. It is also probable that they will be able to achieve greater cost-efficiencies, on the basis that the west end is presently more expensive to service but contributes less through (non-tax) revenues to the recovery of these costs.

From a school system perspective county officials have suggested that the separation of the Drayton Valley area would probably involve a greater loss to the area in question than to the existing system. The present system is comparatively large and well-endowed, and the Drayton Valley area has been able to benefit from the advantages that flow from the large scale of operation and the wealth of specialized resource people and programming. The calculated mill rate changes indicate that the existing system would be slightly better off without its current west-end responsibilities.

Officials and school board representatives have indicated that if the system must be diminished on the west, then consideration should be given to inclusion of the Entwistle school attendance area, and possibly the Seba Beach school attendance area, in the new unit. Nevertheless, their basic position is very much in favour of the status quo, even though it is difficult to identify any current Parkland system interests, outside the Drayton Valley area, which might be adversely affected if the system was diminished. It is understood however that some existing staff, on both the municipal and school sides of the county, are distressed and demoralized by the prospect of a diminished county. Creation of a new unit could result in onerous dislocation problems for a relatively large number of staff in the Parkland context, in comparison with other rural municipalities which might be diminished to make way for a new unit.

From a taxpayer's perspective a diminished Parkland would raise the prospect of a slight increase in municipal taxes, which may or may not be offset by increased operating cost-efficiencies. Even with an increase Parkland taxpayers would still be comparatively well-serviced at below average tax levels. The prospect of an increase signifies that their relatively low tax levels have in the past been somewhat subsidized by the western tax base. In particular, relatively high road standards in the east have been had at the expense of comparatively low expenditure effort in relation to west-end roads. The slight municipal tax rate increase would be partially offset by a decrease in education tax rates, for both general taxpayers and those paying on the basis of E.P. and P.-L. assessment.

The projected tax rate changes in Parkland's case are much less than was determined in the course of a 1977 study of the same issue, mainly because of the current exclusion of coal-mining and power plant assessment around the south-east shore of Lake Wabamun. The county has also seen healthy assessment growth in the intervening period, offsetting some losses related to the formation of the Village of Wabamun, and the recent Edmonton annexation. There are reasonably good prospects for further assessment growth in the central and eastern parts of Parkland. The future integrity and viability of Parkland County appears to be assured, even if the west end was lost. The only possible threats on the horizon would be further annexation by Edmonton, or the formation of a separate public school district in the now City of Spruce Grove: both possibilities seem remote at the present time.

If the school system was diminished by separation of the west-end it is possible that some present tensions relating to the large size of the school board could be eased somewhat. At the present time there are 7 county councillors on the school-board, all with full-time voting status. Spruce Grove and Stony Plain each have three elected representatives with two each having voting status at any given meeting: Drayton Valley has two representatives with one having voting status at any one time. Others have three representatives with two having voting status at any one time. This amounts to a grand total of 18 members with only 14 voting at each meeting. After the next civic election, with nine, rather than seven, county councillors, the school board is due to increase to 20 members of whom 18 would vote. Loss of the west end would probably mean: a return to seven county councillors and to 14 voting members; the prospect of more equitable representation both between councillors and trustees-at-large and among the urban supporters; and the possibility of less non-voting membership.[1]

7.2.2. Leduc County:

The county council currently consists of seven members with two representatives serving the western third of Leduc County. Their divisions are elongated in an east-west direction, one (Division 7) stretching from Berrymoor through Lindale and St. Francis to the Genesee area, and the other (Division 6) stretching from Buck Creek through Breton and Warburg to almost the north shore of Pigeon Lake (Map 7-1). Each division therefore includes substantial areas with very little relationship to Drayton Valley: those residents who might be interested in joining a new unit would almost certainly be a minority in each division. It is not surprising therefore that each of the present division representatives sense no major interest in, or need for, a change in local government arrangements. This is in contrast to their counterparts in the west-end of Parkland.

Both west-end representatives reported that, whereas many of their constituents may have had reason to complain about service deficiencies up until a few years ago, it was their impression that more recently west-end servicing had been stepped-up considerably. In particular, major road improvements were pointed to, especially along

---

[1] For example: 7 County Councillors; 3 Spruce Grove trustees; 3 Stony Plain trustees; 1 other voting trustee, from two or three other representatives.

Secondary Road 616. There were now very few complaints about west-end servicing being brought to the councillors attention.

It was acknowledged by one councillor that interest in joining any new unit would probably be greater west of Buck-Lake Creek, but he still doubted if there would be majority support. The other councillor is particularly anxious that nothing be done to disrupt the Lindale school situation. Both feel that their areas would remain relatively poor cousins, as peripheral to a Drayton Valley-centred unit as they are at present to the county seat in Leduc. In consequence they cannot see any advantages or justification for a change to a unit centred across the North Saskatchewan River.

One councillor suggested that if there must be a change it would make more sense to create two square counties out of the existing Leduc and Wetaskiwin Counties, one for the east and the other for the west. He felt strongly that the North Saskatchewan River should continue to be respected as a municipal boundary.

The Leduc County council as a whole is very opposed to any change in the status quo, and has no desire whatsoever to lose any of its west end to another unit. It is strongly of the opinion that it has met the concerns raised by west-end residents during the last campaign ten years ago. Unlike their Parkland counterparts there has been no indication of any possible resignation to concede territory in the interests of being rid of a cantankerous western minority (see appendices 2.1.1. and 2.1.2.).

Like Parkland however Leduc County is becoming more polarized into a rural west, outside the influence of metropolitan Edmonton, and a semi-urban east, strongly under the metropolitan influence. The council has effectively recognised this fact in their preliminary response to provincial proposals for a realignment of local electoral divisions. Along the lines followed by Parkland, the council has suggested four 'urban' divisions in the east, in the area under the jurisdiction of the Edmonton Metropolitan Regional Planning Commission, and three rural divisions in the west, in the area under the jurisdiction of the Battle River Regional Planning Commission. This would involve slight decreases in the area of Divisions 6 and 7 (in contrast to the increases in these divisions suggested in the provincial government's proposal), but the balance of power will have clearly shifted in favour of the semi-urban east, which may or may not be appreciated by western area residents.

If diminished on account of a new unit Leduc County might be in a position to maintain more of a balance between urban and rural interests (e.g. three divisions each, or three urban/four rural). If it must be diminished the council is also concerned that the boundary not divide the Breton school attendance area (as was the case with the initial study areas arrangement). It seems clear that either the whole of, or none of, the Breton high school attendance area be included in a new unit. Another possible boundary basis for the 'greater' scenario would be that now used for the Breton and District Recreation Board, established by the county.

From a municipal operations perspective Leduc County has less opportunity than Parkland to avoid extra costs associated with a special servicing effort to the west: the county does not maintain any western sub-office. If diminished however the county does stand to benefit from its relief of responsibility for maintaining and constructing western roads. These seem to involve particular problems related to difficult terrain (deep ravines, complicated creek crossings, extensive cut-and-fill situations) and an incomplete road network. The county appears to have been spending relatively large amounts on road work, in recent years, but it is difficult to tell how much of this is accounted for by the different circumstances in the west.

In the course of the comparative financial analyses Leduc County was revealed to be a relatively high spender across the board, with associated high tax levels. If it can be assumed that monies are being spent efficiently and equitably county residents generally, including those in the west end, should be able to easily observe where they are being better served than their neighbours in Parkland or Wetaskiwin Counties. Perhaps this explains the lack of complaints reported by west end councillors. If the assumption cannot be sustained however it is probably the case that there is considerable scope for greater operating efficiencies to be realised. Such an exercise would probably be more assisted than hindered if the county lost part of its west end.

From a school system perspective the board of education is on record as follows:

"1. We prefer that the boundaries stay as they are.

2. We do not want to lose Lindale school, nor do we want to lose enrolment in Breton schools.

3. Breton and Lindale schools are an integral part of our system. We are proud of these schools, their staffs and the community involvement."

(For an elaboration of the school board's position see Appendices 2.2.1. and 2.2.2.) The county school system is also still reeling from the disruption associated with the formation of the (City of) Leduc School District. This strengthens the school board's view that the establishment of a new local government to the west would seriously disrupt the delivery of educational services in the county as a whole.

Issues enumerated by the county school board include the following:

- further serious curtailment of opportunities associated with the economies of scale available in a large system.
- inefficiencies or deficiencies related to fixed costs or needs with respect to specialists and special programming.
- extreme sensitivity, in terms of small high school viability, to changes in attendance areas.
- severe handicapping of the sense of community that has grown between Thorsby, Warburg, Breton and Lindale areas.
- need to settle the current debate over the distribution of E.P. P.-L. assessment for school taxation purposes, before considering a new local government that would be heavily dependent on this form of assessment.

The school board appears to see no redeeming factors in a diminution scenario, and this is probably to be expected given the trauma associated with the recent severance of the City of Leduc from the county system. There may be an element of over-reaction in the school board's position, especially in relation to the 'lesser area' scenario where certain of the board's own arguments against any change can be used to readily justify the inclusion of this area in a new local government.

From a municipal taxpayer's perspective the calculations indicated that the remaining county taxpayers might actually be slightly better off if the 'lesser' area was part of another jurisdiction. However, under the 'greater' area scenario the diminished county taxpayers face the prospect of an increase in the municipal tax rate. It is strongly suspected that this increase can be avoided through readily available operating cost-efficiencies, the successful attainment of which would be enhanced in a diminished county setting. Even without these it can be argued that in the modern post-oil era at least the western tax base has been available to help subsidize the tax costs faced by eastern residents. There are indications that while the west end currently accounts for slightly over 10% of the county's net costs for the provision of municipal services, it generates almost 20% of the total tax revenues raised.

In terms of school taxes E.P. P.-L. ratepayers would probably experience an increase, more so under the 'lesser' diminution scenario, but the higher rate would still be on a par with the rate now in effect in adjacent jurisdictions. For other school taxpayers a slight increase is indicated for the 'lesser' scenario and a slight decrease for the 'greater' scenario (the reverse of the municipal tax shift projection).

A major factor to be considered in the Leduc County case is the power plant development at Genesee, scheduled to be in operation next decade. This should exert a strong moderating or cushioning effect on tax levels in the county. The importance of this factor is difficult to gauge precisely because of other possible developments which could limit the windfall currently anticipated. For example, once the plant is in operation, if not before, the City of Leduc will probably attempt to annex the Nisku industrial area and the International Airport. Another scenario might involve some province-wide general industrial tax-base sharing. These events could erode some of the expected Genesee benefits.

Whatever the exact outcome it is likely that Leduc County will continue to have a relatively healthy assessment base, with or without its west end. Residents of a diminished county need not therefore be unduly concerned about increased taxation as a consequence of diminution on the west. It is more difficult to estimate whether west-end residents would be better off under a new local government. Changes in taxation levels would probably not constitute a decisive factor since the new unit would also have a relatively healthy assessment base. The servicing available would almost certainly be at least as good as that now available - from both a municipal and school perspective, - and the county seat would be quicker and cheaper to access by road or telephone. However, the new unit would by definition be an unknown quantity, in contrast to Leduc County's long-standing record of proven service to the area, and its declared intention to continue to serve west end ratepayers with at least as good a range and quality of services as they might obtain elsewhere. Much will clearly hinge on the outcome of a carefully structured plebiscite to determine where new local government re-arrangements are wanted, to the extent of being warranted.

7.2.3. Improvement District #14:

In August 1983, at the suggestion of the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the two Advisory Councils serving I.D. 14 agreed to amalgamate, in preparation for the possible incorporation of the I.D. The eastern council had been satisfied with the two-council system, while the western council strongly supported the Minister's proposal from the outset. The eastern council consisted of five members operating from a sub-office in Evansburg. The area formerly covered by I.D. 14 (East), basically that part of the I.D. between ranges 7 to 13 inclusive, continues to retain some of its former significance, enclosing the four easterly divisions in the new ten-member I.D. 14 Advisory Council (Map 7-1).

The former I.D. 14 (West), headquartered in Edson, had seven members and is now represented by six members (in five divisions) in the amalgamated situation. Edson continues to be the main office under the new arrangements. The current chairman of the Advisory Council represents a division in the former I.D. 14 (East).

The new council appears to be strongly united in its desire to pursue incorporation within the existing boundaries if this is possible. It cannot understand why any part of the I.D. has been included in the study and is disturbed at the prospect of having this desire frustrated by proposals which would entail incorporation of parts of its existing jurisdiction into new municipalities, nullifying the possibility of incorporation of the existing I.D.

It has been opposed to any approach which involves a presumption that any portion of the I.D. would be automatically included in a new unit should this be pursued. The council is also concerned that any diminution in jurisdiction in its south-east can be adquately rationalized, and is reluctant to accept any case based on such matters as oil/gas field servicing areas, hospital authority boundaries, or areas which are 'unorganized' for school purposes. If a Drayton Valley area unit is viable without encroaching on the existing I.D. they would naturally prefer to see such an option pursued, even if more appropriate boundaries would naturally encompass parts of the I.D. and municipalities other than Parkland County (see Appendices 1.1.1., 1.1.2., and 1.1.3.).

From a municipal operations perspective the I.D. would experience no significant changes in responsibilities unless the Chip Lake area happened to be incorporated into the new jurisdiction. This area is close to being the agricultural core of I.D. 14: its loss could jeopardize the viability of a decent Agricultural Service Board service for the remainder of the I.D. Apart from this it is probable that the diminished I.D. would be slightly better off without the Chip Lake area: servicing costs tend to be greater than available tax revenues, because of the relative concentration of people and roads.

From a school operations perspective the Yellowhead School Division may also be slightly better off without having to service the Chip Lake area, where utilization capacities tend to be lower. The school board appears to hold a position similar to the Leduc County school board (adamantly against any change) rather than the Parkland board (strategically suggesting consideration of more extensive changes if some change in existing arrangements is unavoidable) (see Appendix 1.2.1.). The school system and its supporters would potentially be hurt most by the intermediate scenario diminution. (See also Appendices 1.2.2., 1.2.3., 1.2.4., and 1.2.5.)

From a taxpayer's perspective the diminished I.D. would be liable to encounter increased municipal tax rates, but the level would remain well below average, and there is the prospect of no increase being necessary because of projected large increases in assessment over the 1984 level used in the present calculations. The same situation would pertain for school tax rates, although these do not appear to be so far off the average in comparison with the unusually low municipal tax levels. The increased L.B.I. rates, even if the likelihood of offsetting assessment growth is ignored, would only rise to levels on a par with those anticipated in the other diminished jurisdictions. The E.P. P.L. rate would remain little changed at a comparatively high level.

In contrast to recent trends affecting other rural municipalities the I.D.'s assessment base is growing at an impressive rate, further bolstering already high fiscal capacities. The I.D. has no 'old' Machinery and Equipment assessment liable to be adversely affected by the new policy now being phased in. The 1986 equalized assessment will register a further significant increase, partly on account of the Brazeau gas plant development (in the south-east) but largely because of the Obed Marsh coal development (in the west). Other near-term prospects include increments associated with twinning the C.N.R. rail track, and a similar twinning of the Trans-Mountain Pipeline.

7.2.4. Wetaskiwin County:

The county council consists of seven members, divided into four eastern divisions, one central division, and two western divisions, only part of one of which (Division 7) figures in the present study (Map 7-1). (The other western division covers the Winfield-Pigeon Lake area). The council's general position is one of surprise and incredulity that the extreme west-end of the county has been included in the present study. They have been acting on the strong presumption that there will be no diminution, and this is underlined by the offensive they took in applying to annex the Rose Creek area of the M.D. of Clearwater. (The annexation bid was unsuccessful.)

The present Division 7 councillor has reported that if there was to be a change in local government arrangements affecting the area the popular preference, of a bare majority, would probably be a link-up with the M.D. of Clearwater, based in Rocky Mountain House. The balance of opinion is divided between the status quo (staying in Wetaskiwin County) and joining up with a new Drayton Valley area local government, should this be formed.

From a municipal operations perspective there is the possibility that greater operating efficiencies can be achieved without the extreme west-end, but the area in question is rather small, in comparison with the Leduc and Parkland situations, and this could limit opportunities for improved cost-efficiencies. Similar constraints would apply to the realization of economies in relation to school system operations. The diminished system would involve only a minimal increase in utilization capacity.

From a taxpayers perspective loss of the extreme west-end would result in a small increase in municipal tax rates and a slight decrease in school tax rates. In net terms the diminution would be more hurtful than it would be helpful to Wetaskiwin County.

The county is the poorest of those considered in this study, with the poorest prospects in terms of future assessment growth. This limits, and will continue to limit, the county's ability to provide more than a basic range and level of servicing. It will always have difficulty comparing its servicing situation favourably with that available in better off local governments. As such it will inevitably be liable to lose the allegiance of some residents envious of the servicing attainable in nearby 'richer' jurisdictions. Those now resident in the extreme west end are particularly liable to be influenced by the greater proximity of local governments seated in Rocky Mountain House or Drayton Valley: both much closer than the present county seat in Wetaskiwin. Just as the M.D. of Clearwater was lobbied by some area residents to consider a counter-annexation bid for the three westerly ranges of Wetaskiwin County, it is even more likely that there would be interest in being annexed into a new county to the north, should one be created, since Drayton Valley is closer than Rocky Mountain House.

7.2.5. Clearwater M.D.:

Even though the Rose Creek area of the M.D., west of Alder Flats, represents only a tiny fraction of its total area, the council of the new M.D. of Clearwater has mounted an unusually strong defence of this part of its jurisdiction. It is on record, in the context of opposing Wetaskiwin County's recent annexation bid, as being 'not prepared to lose control' over the area. And, with an eye on the threat posed by a possible new county to the north, the M.D.'s submission to the L.A.B. solicited not only Board rejection of the Wetaskiwin application, but also positive affirmation of the M.D.'s jurisdiction, 'to put to rest any present or future notion that this municipality is prepared to release its administration or its taxation role in regard to this portion of its jurisdictional area.'

The M.D.'s case in opposing the annexation bid was based partly on its position that the county was simply attempting a tax grab: it would not be possible to make such a case if a new municipality was being formed. Similarly, the M.D. developed the superiority of Rocky Mountain House as a base for administering this particular part of the M.D. compared to the more distant Wetaskiwin: it naturally did not engage the issue of whether Drayton Valley might be an even better centre for administration of the area, even though this centre would be closer than either Wetaskiwin or Rocky Mountain House. The M.D. was also very concerned that a successful bid by the county could set a precedent whereby other counties on its eastern border might be tempted to make similar but more substantial forays into the agricultural core of the M.D.: incorporation of the Rose Creek area into a new county to the north would be less precedent-setting than a successful annexation bid.

The area in question used to be part of former I.D. 11 a small, virtually uninhabited, area dominated by crown land within the Green Zone. This older separate status of former I.D. 10 reflects the fact that the area had little real connection with the Rocky Mountain House area prior to the administrative consolidation of both I.D.'s in 1979. Nevertheless, the new M.D. was not averse to considering a counter-annexation bid to include the three westerly ranges of Wetaskiwin County. However, the Reeve of the M.D. has indicated that any such bid would probably have to have the support of 80% of the area's residents before it could proceed (a recent poll indicated only 50% support, on the basis of limited information about all the options).

Taxpayers in the diminished M.D. would face the prospect of very slight increases in tax rates if the Rose Creek area was lost. The taxpayers already enjoy unusually low tax rates and it is difficult to see such increases causing any significant hardship.

7.2.6. Urban Municipalities:

7.2.6.1. Town of Drayton Valley:

The townspeople clearly stand to benefit from more localized local government for the town's trading area, and especially so if a unified county is formed. The difficulties which have faced the town (Pop.: 4982) in the past have been graphically illustrated by the recent 'two-price system' controversy in relation to operation of the town's library and swimming pool.

The town's problem has been in receiving adequate compensation for use of these facilities by rural residents whose councils have been reluctant to re-imburse the town for a proportionate share of the operating deficits. This has engendered much bad blood between the town and the surrounding rural residents, so much so that the town has recently decided to forego pressing the issue in the interests of restoring some harmony. The issue demonstrates how the townspeople, and the residents in the various rural jurisdictions, have both been victimized by the existing fragmentation of local government arrangements for their wider community. Both interests are susceptible to the divide and conquer syndrome, where neighbour is pitted against neighbour as a result of outdated local government structures and boundaries.

To reap the benefits of a unified county approach the town would have to be prepared to harmonize its municipal service financing within the context of a unit where both urban and rural residents would be taxed fairly and equitably. Such harmonization would involve boosting certain service charges or local improvement tax levies, though these would be offset by a commensurate decrease in general tax levies. The town would still have to face the possibility of rejection by rural residents because of the latter's perception that they would be better off, in tax level terms, without the town. However, the town could point to the fact that in return for sharing in the rural oil/gas plant assessment the rural residents would be able to share in future assessment growth within the urban area, most notably the new strandboard mill but also in any new commercial assessment or government buildings attracting grants-in-lieu of taxes.

The town would also have the option of preserving its separate identity if it simply supported the formation of a traditional county, and became a supporter of this county for school purposes. There would be less disruption for the town and inter-municipal agreements would probably be easier to conclude if the town only had to deal with one rural municipality (instead of four). There would still be scope for inter-municipal friction and the town would not so readily share in the oil-patch assessment.

7.2.6.2. Village of Breton:

If a new county, traditional or unified, embraced the greater area of Leduc County the Village of Breton (Population: 534) would become a part of the new county for school purposes. This arrangement would probably involve a lower rate of requisitions for the village. It would become part of a school system roughly similar in size to the one it is in now, but that system would be centred in Drayton Valley rather than Leduc.

It was speculated in the preliminary report that there was a possibility that closer ties between the Village of Breton and Drayton

Valley would be viewed with some trepidation, and this was borne out in the Village's submissions in response (Appendices 2.3.1., 2.3.2., and 2.3.3.). The initial speculation was based on the expectation that locals might, rightly or wrongly, perceive an element of vulnerability in the village's position with respect to such key village 'anchors' as the high school and the hospital. Drayton Valley possesses more extensive senior high school and hospital facilities, so much so that Breton residents might worry about the basis for their school and their hospital facilities being eroded, if both the Village of Breton and the Town of Drayton Valley happened to lie within the boundaries of the same rural municipality. While the Village's submissions testify to the existence of such fears it needs to be clearly stated that these can only be regarded as fears: the study should in no way be construed as advocating or implying any reduction in the wide range of services currently provided, or proposed to be provided, by Breton to the general Breton area.

It is presumed that the Village, and the rural residents it services, would only be interested in considering joining any new unit if existing village service roles were to be maintained, as a minimum, at the present levels. Active support for joining any new unit would probably depend on the prospect of enhanced roles for the village, or more generous cost-sharing arrangements between the village/area and the new unit. At present the Village appears to be very content with the status quo within Leduc County. However there appears to be a growing appreciation of the importance of the villagers and their rural neighbours maintaining a common consistent position, in relation to the issue, and coming to terms with the growing influence of Drayton Valley in their community. The latter would involve overcoming past animosities. In this regard it might be observed that Breton is a much older established agricultural community which did not become heavily involved in servicing the oil and gas developments that sprung up to the west in the 1950's. Drayton Valley came to fill this role and in the process, as it grew in size and influence, came to erode the traditional service areas of the older, but much smaller, communities in the district. Breton is still coming to terms with this situation, and just possibly the prospect of a new local government can be seen as an opportunity for Breton to negotiate better terms for its relationship with Drayton Valley. A new local government, centred in Drayton Valley, but excluding Breton, could pose an increased level of threat to the continued existence of certain key facilities in the village, since Drayton Valley would become even stronger in influence and would become more and more attractive to residents in Breton's service area. However, within the new local government unit Breton might be able to negotiate a better accommodation of its interests as a designated full service sub-centre.

7.2.6.3. Villages of Wildwood, Evansburg and Entwistle[1]:

It is quite conceivable that these villages would, at first blush, be similarly suspicious of coming under the formal umbrella of a unit centred in Drayton Valley. As with Breton these are older established but much smaller communities which have seen much of their former influence gradually assumed by Drayton Valley. Entwistle would gain in terms of reduced school requisitions if it was part of a newunit, but Evansburg and Wildwood would experience little change in this regard.

---

[1] Populations: Wildwood = 450; Evansburg = 785; Entwistle = 470.

Unlike the Breton case, the Yellowhead Highway tends to bind the communities much more closely together in an east-west network, relegating Drayton Valley to more of a 'perpendicular' than dominating influence. Whatever the local government arrangements however the area is certain to be in a peripheral situation, to units seated in Edson, Sangudo, Stony Plain and Drayton Valley. The area would probably welcome most a local government of its own but this does not appear to be a live possibility given the limited assessment base. In making a choice the area could consider the service currently provided by other local authorities, such as the Yellowhead School Division based in Edson, the Parkland school system based in Stony Plain, and the Hospital District based in Drayton Valley.

Apart from Sangudo, Drayton Valley is the closest possible local government seat to the three villages. They form a unit or cell of their own from a schools point of view, and it would be important to maintain this integrity under any revised local government arrangements. (See also Appendices 1.2.4. and 3.3.)

As a general observation it may be noted that in relation to all four villages discussed above Drayton Valley is a much newer and larger community with a very different economic make-up in terms of the prominence of the oil-patch and the related servicing. To the small villages it cannot but appear as a big, brash, hustling, bustling community, and as one which they have difficulty identifying with. The perception of Drayton Valley as 'only an oil-town' has apparently turned off Alder Flats-Buck Lake residents from identifying with the community. This is in contrast to their more positive perception of Rocky Mountain House, which has more of a history and includes more of the lumbering and farming activity which they can better identify with.

Drayton Valley is actively striving to diversify its economy away from a dependence on the oil/gas sector. The new strandboard mill will assist in this diversification, as will the current efforts to expand the agricultural land base. It is already an educational and medical services centre, and its status as a government centre would obviously be enhanced if a new county was created. The community may therefore come to have more in common with the outlying areas and small communities in its hinterland. Such a change in 'personality' would make it easier for these areas to identify with Drayton Valley and to consent to being included (for school purposes) within a local government based there.

7.3. A Drayton Valley Area Local Government:

7.3.1. Introduction:

A separate and distinct local government for the general Drayton Valley area appears to be perfectly feasible and sensible on financial grounds, and in terms of both municipal and education servicing. There is a more than adequate assessment base from a school system perspective, and sufficient assessment from a municipal perspective to cover any unusual servicing costs that might be incurred by a new unit. These general conclusions apply for a range of possible configurations for a new unit, regardless of the area encompassed, and for a variety of options in terms of possible forms of local government. It is not therefore so much a question of whether a new unit is feasible, but of what would be the most appropriate extent and form for a local government serving the district.

7.3.2. Extent of Government:

As far as the appropriate extent is concerned the boundaries would be best built out from a core consisting of the Drayton Valley senior high school attendance area. Additional territory could be included to the extent that current residents of these areas indicate a willingness to come under the jurisdiction of the new unit. In adding territory certain ground rules should be established to ensure the minimum of unwanted disruption to existing school-centred local communities. For example it makes most sense to treat the Wildwood, Evansburg and Entwistle school attendance areas as one sub-system to be wholly included or wholly excluded from the new unit. A similar approach should be adopted with respect to the Lindale-Breton and Alder Flats-Buck Lake school sub-systems. Also, it does not make sense to include the Rose Creek area of Clearwater M.D. unless the adjacent west-end of Wetaskiwin County is also included in the new unit.

As far as the westerly extent is concerned the main reference should be the resource activity area developed or serviced dominantly or significantly from Drayton Valley. This would involve some exercise to determine where that centre's influence fades, and where other service centres, such as Edson and Rocky Mountain House, take over.

7.3.3. Form of Government:

Either form of government discussed earlier is perfectly feasible, but some make more sense than others in particular situations. For example, a small M.D. encompassing only the Drayton Valley area of Parkland County might not be worth creating, while the pursuit of a unified county on this scale, i.e. incorporating the existing town of Drayton Valley, might be more worthwhile. Similarly, a traditional county, rather than a unified county, might be more appropriate for the most extensive configuration, if small villages like Breton, Wildwood, Evansburg and Entwistle had reservations about supporting a county in which Drayton Valley had such a direct role. A small-scale M.D. would probably not justify a parallel new school division, though there would be the option of supporting the existing school systems, and basically maintaining the status quo in school terms.

A unified county makes most sense if the intention is to design a local government that best serves the main industry in the area, the one that would be paying the bulk of the taxes associated with a new unit. There would be less justification to take in large portions of the oil-patch in the existing I.D. if the intended form of government was simply an M.D. or traditional county. In terms of comparative local government status a unified county, on the basis of the most extensive configuration, would create a unit closely rivalling the very largest of rural municipalities, and topping several small cities. It would have a comparatively high profile in an Alberta context, but would involve a large measure of experimentation being a little tried form of government.

An M.D. and traditional county would be relatively simple forms of government to attempt to establish. However, it would be important to determine their appropriateness as vehicles of local government in the context of the next century, rather than the present century. The need to respect urban/rural distinctions appears to be much less in the Drayton Valley area, compared with older established and more purely agricultural areas. Separate urban and rural units do not appear to be so necessary; hence the suggestion that consideration also be given to a unified county form of government.

7.3.4. Municipal Services:

It should be possible to easily maintain, and probably enhance, existing service levels under a new local government. There will be special problems to overcome in certain areas, most notably road developments, but this is where the healthy assessment base will come into play.

There will be demands for better roads to service resource developments outside the settled areas. This will possibly involve the designation of more secondary roads, and a heavy maintenance responsibility for the new unit. It may also wish to spur the improvement of such roads by sharing in the costs of construction or upgrading. In other areas local, farmland-access, road networks are less complete than is normally the case. There will therefore be additional expenses associated with extending and filling-in this network. These expenses will be compounded by the fact that the terrain is fairly difficult, with many deep ravines, unstable slopes, and numerous bridging requirements. The terrain factor will be recognised to some extent in the rural road grant formula applied by the provincial government, but the new local government will have to be prepared to face above average expenses in this area.

A unified county approach would assist in keeping down the expenses of running a council and generally administering the new unit. Strathcona County has achieved considerable efficiencies through common servicing of municipal and school operations, in an integrated urban/rural fashion. However, the larger area to be covered and the sparser population to be served in the Drayton Valley area context may necessitate special measures, such as satellite sub-offices - perhaps in conjunction with the existing village operations - and/or a mobile general administration unit.

The council of the new unit would be able to decide on the range and level of servicing that is appropriate, and this would be particularly important in relation to police services. The R.C.M.P. would be available to contract for the urban area service. At the moment the R.C.M.P. provides a free service to rural areas through a contract with the provincial government. A charge for this service will probably be levied by the province in future years, at which time it may be appropriate for the new unit to enter into a more comprehensive policing contract with the R.C.M.P. There would always be the option of maintaining a county police force, as is now the case in Parkland. Another option would be to settle for a beefed-up bylaw enforcement operation.

It is assumed that fire protection for the new unit would continue to be handled predominantly by the force now operating out of the Town of Drayton Valley, in association with squads of volunteers operating from fire halls established in outlying areas. Little change is also anticipated in relation to ambulance servicing, or the operation of the new regional sanitary landfill system. These systems could be easily extended where appropriate to service all the areas that might fall under the new unit's jurisdiction.

The equitable provision of recreation services may be more problematic since it would be difficult to replicate the Drayton Valley facilities in the outlying areas. Generous funding of community associations, or agreements with villages able to better serve certain rural areas, would have to be considered. Strathcona County is large enough and wealthy enough to provide rural recreation complexes in each of its rural divisions, to complement the efforts of community associations which act as mini-recreation service agencies. The new unit would have to devise an appropriate response for its particular situation, probably involving something along the lines of the regional system found in Leduc County. A community school philosophy would also be in order to make the best use of resources in serving areas distant from Drayton Valley. In this respect the school side of a new local government unit might be of particular assistance to Breton in its current efforts to incorporate an indoor swimming pool into its high school.

A decent Agricultural Services Board operation will be of particular concern to farming interests within the new unit. It would have to be tailored to meet the particular needs of the area. Similarly, a more substantial Family and Community Support Services operation might well be sought by urban interests especially. Both of these services, which tend to be important for particular minorities, would become more feasible in a unified county context, where urban residents wishing to take advantage of the agricultural services could do so quite easily, while those rural residents wishing to access the F.C.S.S. programs could do so without impediments.

7.3.5. Education Services:

A school system operated by the new unit would have the benefit of a considerable assessment base, providing the opportunity to more easily sustain existing schooling provisions with a minimum of disruptive change. The most extensive configuration would constitute a fairly balanced system on a scale sufficient to ensure at least the present level of service. Smaller system configurations would entail a greater struggle to maintain the standards which have come to be generally accepted under the present arrangements. The possible contrast would be particularly noticeable for Parkland system users, since this system is significantly larger than any of those which might replace it. It should be recalled that officials of the Parkland system feel that the greater loss, should the system be diminished, would be felt by Drayton Valley area residents now served by Parkland.

The most extensive configuration would demand the maintenance of small high schools in outlying areas, since travelling time-distances to Drayton Valley would obviously be too onerous for too many students resident in these areas. The system would therefore have to be prepared to tolerate low utilization capacities in several schools, while still striving to provide a high level of programming. In this respect some innovation may be required whereby the specialized senior high school in Drayton Valley could serve as a learning resource centre for outlying high schools. It could be the base for itinerant specialist teachers, or its facilities could be used periodically by outlying senior high students where this makes sense. The healthy assessment base of a new system should be capable of sustaining the extra costs associated with such measures.

Another possibility would be to have separate boundaries for the municipal operations and school system of any new county. For example, it makes sense for a unit to embrace much of the south-east portion of I.D. 14 for municipal purposes if the oil-patch is to be serviced in a major way, but it may be more sensible and fairer to leave the Yellowhead School Division with a claim on the assessment base involved for school purposes, if this can be worked out.

7.3.6. Consequentials:

The creation of a new local government in the Drayton Valley area would also have possible consequences for other local authorities currently serving the area. For example, its boundaries could indicate more appropriate boundaries for the existing hospital district, though this is unlikely to be pursued actively (see Appendix 5.1). The same may apply to other agencies such as the health unit (Appendix 5.3), or the Alberta Agriculture district.

The area under study is also served by three regional planning commissions: Red Deer R.P.C. is responsible for the small part of Clearwater M.D.; Battle River R.P.C. services Wetaskiwin County and the western half of Leduc County; and the Yellowhead R.P.C. covers I.D. 14 and the western half of Parkland County. A new local government for the area would probably have most in common with those municipalities currently serviced by the Yellowhead R.P.C., and perhaps the balance of Parkland could be placed wholly within the Edmonton Metropolitan R.P.C. (as is the case with the eastern half of Parkland at the present time). (See Appendices 5.2.1., 5.2.2. and 2.3.2., p. 5.)

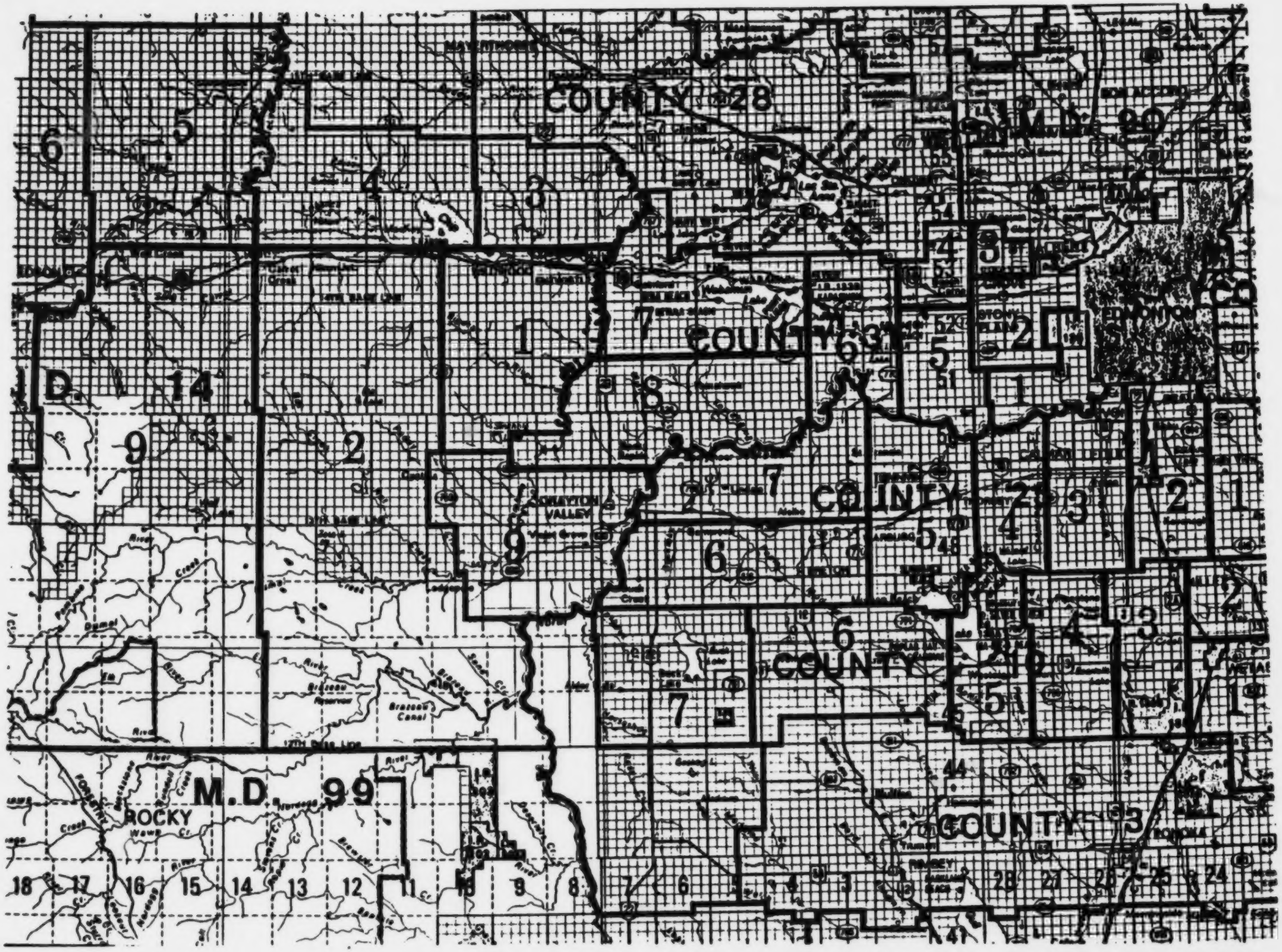
7.4. Future Action Considerations

This report is intended to assist area residents in coming to a more informed decision as to what local government re-arrangements, if any, might be appropriate. The main factors to be considered relate less to changed taxation levels and more to what extent and form of local government would more conveniently and capably serve their needs. A Drayton Valley-based unit could provide comparable or greater convenience and servicing capacity over a relatively extensive area. It is less certain however if a majority of the residents of this area would willingly consent to be governed by the new unit. A unified county form of government appears to have certain merits but it is uncertain if this approach would find general acceptance, in comparison with more familiar tried-and-proven approaches, such as a municipal district or traditional county. Future action should centre on settling both these issues before addressing the basic question of whether a new local government is warranted, given the ensuing disruption of existing local governments.

A lobby group has been organized with the specific purpose of realising a new county in the Drayton Valley area (see Appendices 6.1.1. and 6.1.2.). This group can be expected to make particular use of the report, and to be especially interested in helping to settle the issues mentioned above. It will probably be holding public meetings across the area. It is conceivable that petitions will emerge where there is majority support for a workable consensus, and that these will be combined into a single petition to the Minister requesting appropriate action.

If and when such a petition is received the Minister has the option of appointing a boundaries commission to make recommendations on the matter (under Section 14(1) of the Municipal Government Act). Such a commission approach would be similar to that taken about ten years ago when the Leslie committee was appointed to consider basically the same matter. The previous committee did not have the benefit of an extensive information report on the subject, and its deliberations stretched over about four years. It should be possible, and - it is believed - would be generally desirable, for a short time-limit to be set on the period within which such a committee must report its recommendations.

If some local government re-arrangements appear to merit serious pursuit the Minister may wish to provide for a series of local plebiscites to help define what areas ought to be subject to the changes. If an immediate traditional county is preferred (rather than an M.D. first), or if a unified county is the desired form of government, the Minister would have to be prepared to pursue special accommodating legislation.


COUNTY 28
M.D. 90
COUNTY 63
COUNTY
COUNTY
COUNTY 13
M.D. 99
I.D. 14
ROCKY
DRAYTON VALLEY
EDMONTON
18
17
16
15
14
13
12
11
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
28
27
26
25
24

MAP 7-1 : DRAYTON VALLEY AREA MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

LOCAL ELECTORAL DIVISIONS : EXISTING OR PROPOSED

TABLE 7-1: PARKLAND COUNTY: LOCAL ELECTORAL DIVISIONS BY POPULATION

	Current Division		Proposed (Map 7-1) (for 1986 elections) Division		
	1.	5,628	1.	3,427	County Urban TOTAL 13,166 (Average: 3,291)
	2.	4,518	2.	3,396	
	3.	5,778	3.	3,315	
(Wabamun-Kapasiwin)	4.	2,176	4.	3,028	
(Moon L.-Magnolia-Seba)	5.	1,440	5.	2,276	County Rural TOTAL 10,798 (Average: 2,160)
(Rocky Rapids-Tomahawk)	6.	1,790	6.	2,162	
(Drayton Valley Area)	7.	2,620	7.	1,950	
	TOTAL	23,950	8.	2,029	
	(Average:	3,421)	9.	2,381	

DRAYTON VALLEY AREA

MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

MAIN REPORT

APPENDIX

Preface to the Appendix

The Appendix comprises submissions received as a result of the circulation of the draft of the Preliminary Main Report on the study. This circulation was made in December 1985, mainly to those municipalities and school authorities liable to be most directly affected by the various options studied. Most of these bodies responded with a submission appendixed here. Those bodies who had not responded by the publication date include: Parkland County Council; Wetaskiwin County School Board; M.D. of Clearwater; Rocky Mountain School Division; and the Drayton Valley Hospital District. The cover letter for the circulation requested identification of any major errors or omissions, and especially invited any points of information in addition to, or by way of reaction to, the pertinent material in the preliminary report.

The initial circulation included the Director of the West-Central Health Unit, the Executive Directors of all regional planning commissions liable to be affected by any change, and the District Agriculturist and E.R.C.B. Area Supervisor for the Drayton Valley area. Seven M.L.A.s representing constituencies liable to be partly affected were provided with copies of the preliminary report. There was also an extensive circulation within the Departments of Municipal Affairs and Education, and a smaller circulation to the Department of Hospitals and Medicare.

A few individuals and interest groups were provided with copies through the M.L.A.

APPENDIX CONTENTS

1. Improvement District No. 14/Yellowhead School Division No. 12:

   1.1. I.D. No. 14 Advisory Council
      1.1.1. Letter to Minister (January 17, 1986)
      1.1.2. General Comments
      1.1.3. Detailed Comments ("Appendix A")

   1.2. Yellowhead School Division
      1.2.1. Board of Trustees
      1.2.2. Town of Hinton
      1.2.3. Town of Edson
      1.2.4. Village of Wildwood
      1.2.5. Village of Evansburg

2. County of Leduc:

   2.1. Leduc County Council
      2.1.1. Letter to Minister (January 27, 1986)
      2.1.2. Supporting Documentation News Release

   2.2. Leduc County Board of Education
      2.2.1. Preliminary Comments (January 15, 1986)
      2.2.2. Public Message (February, 1986)

   2.3. Village of Breton
      2.3.1. Letter to Minister (February 11, 1986)
      2.3.2. Main Response
      2.3.3. Statement to Yes Group Meeting (February 24, 1986)

3. County of Parkland:

   3.1. Parkland County Board of Education
      3.1.1. Letter to the Department (January 16, 1986)
      3.1.2. Letter to the Provincial Government (January 16, 1986)

   3.2. Town of Drayton Valley

   3.3. Village of Entwistle

4. County of Wetaskiwin:

   4.1. Wetaskiwin County Council

5. Other Public Agencies:

- 5.1. Alberta Hospitals and Medical Care
- 5.2. Regional Planning Commissions
  - 5.2.1. Edmonton Metropolitan R.P.C.
  - 5.2.2. Yellowhead R.P.C.
- 5.3. Alberta West Central Health Unit

6. Interest Groups:

- 6.1. Yes Group of Western Ratepayers
  - 6.1.1. Letter to Minister (February 6, 1986)
  - 6.1.2. Breton District Yes Group
- 6.2. Breton and District Chamber of Commerce

January 17, 1986

Honorable Julian G.J. Koziak
Minister of Municipal Affairs
224 Legislature Building
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2B6

Dear Mr. Koziak:

Re: DRAYTON VALLEY AREA
MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

The Advisory Council for Improvement District No. 14 reviewed the above study and I have attached our comments for your review. As you will see from our comments the study has made some very incorrect assumptions and the effects of this proposal would be detrimental to all improvement district taxpayers.

We request that you as Council for our municipality and as Minister of Municipal Affairs consider the following:

1) The Chip Lake area residents do not want to become part of a rural municipality centered in Drayton Valley. Of this we are certain. Public meetings could quickly be arranged to substantiate this claim.

2) The intermediate and minimal options contained in the study will significantly increase taxes on all industrial taxpayers in the improvement district. Depending on which of the two options is chosen, taxes on industry going into the new municipality will increase from 38% to 45%, and for those industries remaining in I.D. 14 taxes will increase from 5.8% to 23.4%. These increases will generally apply to all I.D. taxpayers. Contemplating increases such as this, cannot be justified.

3) When considering the various study options it is apparent that the improvement district will not suffer alone. Because of the loss of assessment (and therefore equalized assessment) the Towns of Hinton and Edson, and the Villages of Wildwood and Evansburg could experience upto a 20.5% increase in their school requisitions.

4) As you know this improvement district is working towards incorporation. Significant territorial losses which result in major assessment reductions will wipe out any incorporation opportunities for the residents of this area.

We realize that it is impossible to now withdraw the study; however, amendments must be made considering our comments. In addition we suggest that an analysis of the problem be undertaken. The study refers to feelings or perceptions by Drayton Valley residents, but it does not clearly state what the precise problem is. Once the problem is identified options can be prepared and the creation of a new municipality may not be necessary. A less disruptive, more cost effective solution may be found.

Yours truly

ARNOLD JORGENSEN
Chairman, Advisory Council
Improvement District No. 14

AJ/jes

c.c. Honorable Peter Trynchy
Minister of Recreation and Parks
and MLA for the Whitecourt Constituency

c.c. Honorable Ian Reid
Solicitor General
and MLA for the Edson Constituency

c.c. Mrs. Shirley Cripps
MLA for the Drayton Valley Constituency

c.c. Mr. Robin J.C. Ford
Assistant Deputy Minister
Alberta Municipal Affairs

c.c. Mr. Archie Grover
Assistant Deputy Minister
Alberta Municipal Affairs

IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 14
COMMENTS ON THE DRAYTON VALLEY
MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY.

From the I.D. No. 14 Advisory Council's perspective we have no objection to the development of a new separate local government in the Drayton Valley area of the County of Parkland. What we do take extreme exception to is that the development of this new local government will more than likely result in a reduction in I.D. assessment (and therefore wealth) and territory. With those reductions, substantial added tax burdens will be placed on the remaining taxpayers of Improvement District No. 14 and the urban municipalities within the I.D. It is clear that those ratepayers that are taken into the new municipality will also experience a significant increase in taxes. In addition to added tax burdens, changes in the I.D.'s municipal revenue base will impact upon the incorporation plans of the Advisory Council.

The study gives two main reasons for suggesting that parts of I.D. 14 should be included in the new municipality:

1. The Drayton Valley service area extends well into the Improvement District
2. Improvement District No. 14, because of its existing and growing assessment wealth, can afford to lose some assessment.

Neither suggestion is strong enough to justify major boundary adjustments.

The Drayton Valley trading area map, used in the study, no longer represents a true, or near true area of municipal influence. The trading areas of the Villages of Evansburg, Entwistle and Wildwood cut deep into the Drayton Valley area. Using the Hospital District boundary is also misleading. Although the Drayton Valley Hospital takes in that area around Wildwood and Evansburg many people in this area use the new Mayerthorpe Hospital and Edmonton hospitals. Using the telephone toll free exchange and the District Agriculturist Service Area for support arguments are weak to the extent that they should not be used. The fire district boundary, although it extends into I.D. 14 (secondary fire response only) is also meaningless. The boundary was established without consulting the I.D. and the fire protection service in this area is either provided by the forest service or the resource companies themselves.

The only argument with a reasonable level of substance is based on commercial/industrial servicing being provided from Drayton Valley. This is however way over stated. From a municipal point of view that area of I.D. 14 being considered for "annexation" does not cost Drayton Valley anything. Having these industries doing their business in Town is only beneficial, and if an M.D. is formed the assessment wealth taken from I.D. 14 will not directly benefit the town any more than it can now. To say that the Town of Drayton Valley provides the support services for industry in the I.D. does not in itself justify the rural boundary expansion. It can be shown that major services are provided to the Brazeau area from Edson, Rocky Mountain House, Evansburg, Wildwood and Edmonton thereby weakening this primary argument presented by the study.

If we extend this argument put forward by the study, new and separate municipalities would be formed all over the province, in particular each town over 2500 would centre an individual and separate rural municipality.

The suggestion that I.D. 14 could withstand a 21% reduction in its assessment is not true and is certainly not substantiated in the study. A number of assumptions have been made that do not consider the present day improvement district municipal operation. The use of an equalized mill rate we feel is very misleading. Although the I.D. equalized mill rate is low, there are very good reasons for it being there.

A sound financial management system is utilized by the Advisory Council whereby services are provided in phased forms to keep the tax burdens as low as possible. A prime example of this is in the area of fire protection. The process of providing fire protection services to all areas of I.D. 14 began in 1978. 1985 was the first time fire protection services were provided in the Hamlet of Marlboro. I.D. 14 will now continue in future years to bring the existing fire halls up to a full operational level. The first point of this is to show that the service level in the I.D. is lower than that of adjacent municipalities and therefore the mill rate should be lower. The second point is to show that, a system of providing services in a progressive, planned fashion over time will in the long run keep the mill rate down.

The study uses terms such as, "lack of expenditure effort" or not taxing to the "fullest extent possible". We see it more as a planned, patient system with significant tax benefits to the ratepayers.

The net result if a portion of the I.D. is taken into the new municipality will be that taxes will go up for those ratepayers going into the new municipality and it will go up for those that remain in I.D. 14, with no increase in service levels.

We have taken a few examples of what the 1985 tax impact (municipal taxes only) would have been on some I.D. ratepayers if the new municipality was formed in 1984 (using the "intermediate" scenario).

	Actual Paid	If D.V. was formed
Gregg River Coal Co.	117,688.82	148,596.11
Gulf Hanlin Gas Plant	302,367.12	381,776.67
Edson Area Residence	728.64	920.00
Hinton Area Residence	1657.48	2092.78

Without a significant increase in services the above increases are simply not justifyable.

It has long been the provincial government's concern that the municipal tax on industry may be too large. I.D. 14 has recognized this and has done everything it can to keep the industrial tax as low as possible. The study interpretes this as a lack of expenditure effort. Because, industry is the major taxpayer in the region it is very clear who will be paying for the new municipality.

The study also suggests that I.D. 14 is very wealthy in per capita or per kilometer of road comparisons, even with its very low equalized mill rate (i.e. it has more money than it needs). While it may seem that I.D. 14 is very wealthy when comparing it to other municipalities, it should be pointed out that the costs of providing services in the I.D. are very high. Because of the terrain and weather, road costs are high. The population of I.D. 14 is spread out over large distances. Economies of scale cannot be realized.

For example: The hamlet of Cadomin has a full slate of municipal services; fire, water, recreation, roads, street lights, dog control, etc., and has a population of 114, located 100 kilometers from Edson. The I.D. has many hamlets like Cadomin. Servicing costs are extremely high.

I.D. 14 is still developing, as stated earlier, in a planned and organized manner. The cost of building new roads, constructing new recreational facilities, water and sewer systems, establishing new fire halls etc., is very high.

The I.D. may seem well off when compared as the study does, but in fact it is not. The large reserves are a result of good management by the Advisory Council and the department. The capital reserve is a result of the Municipal Debt Reduction grant and has been maintained through conserted efforts by the I.D. not to spend the funds unnecessarily, but use them only on most important projects of lasting significance.

The operating reserve was created to allow the I.D. to operate and pay requisitions prior to the collection of taxes. This is not a measure of wealth but a necessary fiscal requirement.

The three scenarios for I.D. 14 territory removal merit some comment:

Chip Lake Proposal - We know this will be totally unacceptable to the people of this region. As stated earlier they have little to do with Drayton Valley and since they are in the Yellowhead School Division they have more in common with Edson.

This proposal will alienate the Chip Lake area residents much the same as Drayton Valley area residents now are. The Pembina River provides a major obstacle to the probability of this proposal succeeding with the only bridge being on Highway 16.

At public meetings, where the Drayton Valley issue was discussed, there was a strong desire on behalf of the public in attendance to remain in the I.D. 14 unit or an incorporated I.D. 14.

Intermediate Area - This is viewed purely as a revenue grab. The I.D. cannot afford such a drastic reduction in assessment. There will be strong support from industry and the public to resist this scenario. It is not the time to start increasing taxes by over 20%.

Minimal Area - The same arguments apply here as in the intermediate area, however the impact upon the I.D. will not be as large. Our major concern is for the industry that would be taken into the new municipality. From the study it appears that they would experience at least a 45% increase in taxes. Again - unacceptable.

The Advisory Council for Improvement District No. 14 is most disappointed that consideration was not given to our suggestion to study only the Drayton Valley area of Parkland County. From the study one can only assume that a portion of I.D. 14 will be taken if a new rural municipality is created. As we have pointed out, the tax burden will be unacceptable to industry in particular, and in general, will place the I.D. in a fiscal straight jacket.

A fact that has long been known is that the equalized assessment per capita in the Drayton Valley area of Parkland is very high. The study supports this by showing the Drayton Valley area as having $18,912 equalized assessment per capita. The 10 rural municipal average is $10,591 per capita. I.D. 14 has a higher figure ($21,572) but considering that it is still developing services, considering the high costs of providing services, and considering that the I.D. is looking at incorporating, it simply makes no sense to take I.D. territory. The Drayton Valley area has more than enough wealth to survive and prosper without I.D. 14.

The long term viability of the new municipality is a major question the study inadvertently raised. It was suggested that the new municipality keep its tax levels high to create a large reserve. When the oil and gas industry in the area starts to drop off the reserves would be used to offset the reduced tax dollars. This is a practice that, although legal, is improper. Industry, or any taxpayer for that matter, should not be expected to pay for future services that he will not utilize. If the fiscal health of the new municipality depends on "over taxing" it should not be created.

When one reads the study, it is apparent that the division of the County of Parkland is the only remedy to the problem. However there is no definition of the problem other than expressed feelings or perceptions. We find it very hard to believe that major municipal disruptions would be considered without an honest effort to clearly define what the problem actually is and analyze options for resolving the problem.

The attached Appendix "A" contains comments in more detail for reference purposes.

APPENDIX "A"

Page 1 - 1.	The background of the report states that the report itself addresses a long standing and contentious issue in Drayton Valley, a "feeling" that the area around Drayton Valley would be better served with its own local government rather than a local government loccated in the eastern end of the County. In fact the study addresses the issue of whether or not a municipality can be formed in the western area and does not address the so called "long standing and contentious issues". Statements are made claiming that the western part and the eastern part of the County of Parkland do not receive equal benefits however there is no substantiation to these statements.
Page 1 - 4	It was not possible to clearly delineate the area predominately serviced from Drayton Valley. However, throughout the report the main reason for expanding the municipality into I.D. 14 is based upon a perceived service area. The core study area was defined as all that part of the recently revised provincial electoral division of Drayton Valley lying north and west of the North Saskatchewan River. This decision has major implications on Improvement District No. 14. Our contention is that provincial electoral boundaries have very little bearing on municipal boundaries. Justification of boundary setting is very weak throughout the report. Arguments will be made elsewhere in these comments regarding boundaries, since they have major implications on the welfare and the future of Improvement District No. 14.
Pages 2-2 & 2-3	The study discusses the number of persons working in the town and residing out of the town. It also discusses the types of employment and the development of the town of Drayton Valley. We maintain that Drayton Valley is not an unusual case. The towns of Redwater, Spruce Grove, Stony Plain, Edson, Hinton, (Evansburg, and Wildwood to a lesser extent) all have similar relationships with their rural partner and have developed similarly.
Page 2- 7	Reference is made to the Drayton Valley Hospital District boundaries. Justification for a boundary adjustment in I.D. 14 is based in part on the fact that the Drayton Valley Hospital District extends into a large area of I.D. 14. It should be noted that with the development of the new Mayerthorpe Hospital and the paving of Highway 755, more use is being made of Mayerthorpe because of its proximity and because of the good road.

As the study points out elsewhere, the Health Unit Boundaries cover a very extensive area (all of I.D. 14 and part of Parkland). It is recognized that health services boundaries have little in common with municipal boundaries.

Page 2-9

It is interesting to note that both the County of Parkland and the Town of Drayton Valley have expressed a desire to receive some tax transfer to compensate the Town for housing workers servicing the oil and gas developments in the I.D., or to compensate the County for road maintenance and reconstruction expenses related to heavy oil patch traffic. However, neither the Town nor the County have communicated this to the I.D. Advisory Council.

Page 2-10

The secondary fire response area from the Town of Drayton Valley extends into a portion of Improvement District No. 14. This is of little consequence. An agreement has not been struck with the I.D. for the Town to provide fire protection services in that area, and the companies (ie. gas plants etc.), usually provided their own fire suppression services. The role of the Town of Drayton Valley in this area is therefore questionable.

Page 2-11(Map 2-1)

Drayton Valley trading area map is very misleading. It would be very interesting to know the trading areas of Evansburg and Wildwood and their impact on this map. Because of the age of the map and because the other urban trading areas were not considered, this map should be removed from the study or updated.

Page 2-17(Map 2-7)

The informal addition of a Drayton Valley service area defined by the District Agriculturist is also very questionable. This new area covers a large area of I.D. 14 where there is definitely no farming activity. The map should be upgraded to be more precise or it should be removed.

Page 2-18(Map 2-8)

The use of toll free calling relationships is also questionable. If this was an argument supporting boundary expansion Edmonton would be a much larger city.

Page 3-2

Justification for including the Chip Lake area of I.D. 14 into the study area is based upon the fact that the Hospital District Boundary included this area. This hospital district boundary does not indicate a true pattern of facility use or communication.

Page 3-5 (Table 3-1)	It should be noted that elsewhere in the report the road kilometers indicated for I.D. 14 was 1607 kilometers rather than 2341 as reported on this table.
Page 4-3	The study refers to a "great demand" for increased/improved resource road network serving the oil patch in I.D. 14, around Drayton Valley. This great demand has never been relayed to Improvement District No. 14 Advisory Council, and Alberta Transportation have in fact, been developing and upgrading the road network in the area. It would be interesting to know what this great demand is and where it is coming from.
Page 4-9	The report uses fiscal capacities to compare the diminished municipalities in terms of their ability to provide services. This is a major error, when one considers the difference in costs for providing similar services in each municipality. For example the provision of fire protection services in the Coal Branch area of I.D. 14 is considerably higher, on a per capita basis than the provision of fire services in the eastern end of the County of Parkland. Also, the provision of road services in all of I.D. 14 is considerably higher, than provision of road services in the County of Parkland. As defined in the report fiscal capacity does not truly represent the ability of the municipality to provide services.
Page 4-15	A statement is made regarding the incorporation of Improvement District No. 14 and the possible effect that the creation of a new Drayton Valley County could have. "Nothing should happen around the Drayton Valley area that would jeopardize the future incorporation of the Improvement District". We certainly support this.
Page 4-16	A comment is made that the Improvement District No. 14 has a large opportunity to increase its tax rate. It should be noted that most of the tax revenue generated in the I.D. is from industry. Any increase in the tax rate therefore, will be paid primarily by industry. This is a contradiction to the Minister's desire to keep the tax levels as low as possible on industry.
Page 4-23	The study suggests that Improvement District No. 14 and other affected municipalities could achieve a higher function cost recovery and therefore offset the loss of income or revenue resulting from the creation of a new muncipality. It is evident here that statistics again are misleading.

If Improvement District No. 14 was to include all the transportation costs that were spent in I.D. 14 and consider them as a transportation grant, the function cost recovery rate would be considerably higher. Also, considering the services provided by the I.D. there is little room for additional cost recovery.

Page 4-25 The study refers to equalized tax rate as being a good indicator of tax rate relationship among the study municipalities. It is important to note here that Improvement District No. 14 may have a low equalized tax rate, but there are reasons for that. The primary reason is because Improvement District No. 14 delivers a lower level of service as compared to County of Parkland for example. If the Improvement District chose to provide a higher level of service or if expenditures were not planned in the manner that they now are, the municipal equalized tax rate would be much higher. The point that we are getting at here is that taxes are lower in Improvement District No. 14 because of fiscal management exercised by the Advisory Council and because it was a decision of the Advisory Council to offer a level of service that they have chosen.

Page 4-27 Reserves, capital and operating. When I.D. 14 received the MDR grant, the Improvement District Advisory Council chose not to quickly spend the money but rather invest it and use it on projects of lasting significance. This again is a fiscal management decision exercised by the I.D. Advisory Council. The Advisory Council could have chosen to spend the money and therefore be in a similar situation as other municipalities in Alberta with a low capital reserve. With regards to the operating reserve, this reserve is necessary to offset those expenditures required prior to the collection of taxes. If taxes could be collected earlier, the Improvement District Advisory Council would reduce the operating reserve accordingly. The point here is, these funds are in place because of a fiscal management style, and it would seem unfair to use a style of sound fiscal management as an argument against the Improvement District. The study also states that because of the high reserves in the Improvement District it is in a good position to withstand the consequencies of any loss of territory. This is a very short sighted and incorrect observation.

Page 4-29 This section, refers to expenditure effort. If all municipalities were delivering the same level of service under similar conditions, then it would be fair to compare expenditure efforts. However, this is not the case, this argument is therefore not very useful.

Page 4-30&4-31 There will be a significant increase in the equalized expenditure rate for Improvement District No. 14 if the new municipality was formed. A 23.4% increase is possible. The study states that the diminished I.D's millrate (equalized) will be 21.1 which remains below the rates of other muncipalities, thereby justifying the loss. However, the Improvement District has consciously attempted to keep its millrate low by practicing sound fiscal management and by planning expenditures. The level of service delivery in the I.D. is lower than that of all municipalities being studied. The 23.4% increase will be incurred if the new municipality is formed with no increase in services. The service level will still be below that of other municipalities.

Page 4-42 to 4-43(Table 4-7)

This table shows the gross net operating expenditures and makes comparisons on a per capita and percentage basis, using the 1981 to 84 average statistics. It should be noted that so much has happened since 1984 to I.D. 14 that these statistics can be misleading. A good example is in the transportation/public works section. The report shows the following,

1981 to 1984,

Gross		Net	
Per Capita	Percentage	Per Capita	Percentage
$ 230.30	44.9	$ 225.20	55.4

In 1985 the figures are as follows,

Gross		Net	
Per Capita	Percentage	Per Capita	Percentage
$ 408.00	56.1	$ 406.40	61.9

This very clearly shows that the Improvement District has been quickly moving towards and may now in fact be exceeding net municipal transportation/public works expenditures incurred by the average M.D. and County in the province.

Page 4-40to 4-44 (Table 4-8)

This table shows that the total road kilometers in the I.D. is 1607 whereas other tables show that the I.D. has considerably more kilometers. This should be checked.

Page 4-45(Table 4-9)

This table tries to depict the expenditure effort made by the I.D. in the area of transportation, public works. Again because the report only goes to 1984 it is not truly indicative of what is happening in the I.D. at the present time. In 1986 for example, the I.D. will expend 3.3 million dollars on transportation/public works, and received a revenue of 15 thousand dollars, for a net expenditure of 3.29 million dollars. If we divide this by 2341 kilometers of road, we get a per kilometer expenditure of $1,405.00. This compares quite favorably with the County and rural municipal average of $1300.00 in 1984. The I.D. per kilometer expenditure may be higher if the kilometerage figure is incorrect.

Page 4-46(Table 4-10)

These figures are again misleading because I.D. 14 does not receive any transportation grant therefore our operating revenue is lower in comparison to other municipalities.

Page 4-47 (Table 4-11)

Same applies here.

Page 4-48 (Table 4-12)

It is interesting to note here that the average municipal taxation level from 1981-84 shows that I.D. 14 on a per capita basis, was generating almost as much revenue as the five M.D. average. We suspect with the increases in taxes that the I.D. has experienced over the last number of years that they now exceed other municipalities on a per capita basis.

Page 4-49(Table 4-13)

This is an interesting table because much of the report is based on the prospect that Improvement District No. 14 is not generating the tax rate it is capable of. To further add to our arguments that much has happened since 1984, the following is used as an example.

If we assume that a 15% increase in the equalized assessment will be experienced in I.D. 14 from 1985 to 1986 and using the 1986 tax levy a millrate of 20 will result. This means from the average data that was presented in this table the I.D. will have experienced a 17.6% increase in the equalized millrate. This clearly shows that the I.D. is now collecting more in equalized millrate terms and we doubt whether any other of the sample municipalities have experienced a 17.6% increase in equalized millrates.

Page 5-3

The study states that the town has recently experienced difficulties or frustrations in dealing with Improvement District No. 14. It is interesting to note that since the present Manager has been here the Town of Drayton Valley has not contacted our office once. No contact has been made with the Advisory Council either.

Page 5-7

We take extreme exception to the statement that reads as follows, "it is considered that neither of three deminuation scenario's outlined below would critically impede successful incorporation of I.D. 14 in the near future". We have not seen any evidence to support this statement. As a matter of fact, everything points to the opposite. A 26% loss in equalized assessment will seriously impede the incorporation prospects for the I.D.and in fact will impinge upon the ability of the Improvement District to deliver services.

Page 5-9

The suggestion has been made that a unified urban rural county be formed, like Strathcona County, with Drayton Valley and the surrounding rural area. The question that raises itself here is, would we not be creating a similar situation to what now exists, ie. people feeling that they are not represented in a fair manner? We have a situation now, where there are differences of opinion because of the urban-rural nature of the County of Parkland. Now we are suggesting to create a definite urban-rural municipality.

Page 5-24

It is recommended here and elsewhere in the study that the newly formed local government should maintain a higher level of taxation and avoid tax cuts. The purpose of this would be to build up a large contingency reserve while oil activity existed in the municipal boundaries. At the time when the oil activity started to drop off the municipality could then call upon the contingency reserves to offset that revenue loss. This is unfair to request an industrial taxpayer to pay taxes for future residents and future services, particularly if he is not there to receive any benefit. The industrial operator certainly will not appreciate such a suggestion. This further shows that the long term viability of the municipality is in question.

Page 7-21	On this page and many others, terms such as "sensible" or "embarassing" are used which we feel are very inappropriate. When discussing boundaries, for example, what may be sensible to one will not be to another. Embarassing levels of assessment is also a very inaccurate term. The County of Strathcona and others like it are probably not very embarrassed about their assessment levels.
Page 7- 32 & 33	The study states that any form of local government is feasible, but what it does not say is that any of the options presented will be detrimental to the I.D.
Page 7-39	It is suggested that it makes sense to absorb the "intermediate" area of I.D. 14 for municipal purposes but it does not for school purposes. It is not clear why this suggestion is made. Arguments used for absorbing portions of I.D. 14 for municipal purposes and not applying them to school does not make sense.

A 1.2.1.-1

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF THE
YELLOWHEAD SCHOOL DIVISION NO. 12

Reaction To:

PRELIMINARY MAIN REPORT
OF THE
DRAYTON VALLEY MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

January 29, 1986

The Preliminary Main Report of the Drayton Valley Area Municipal Feasibility Study has been examined by the Board of Trustees of the Yellowhead School Division.
The Division objects strongly to many aspects of the report and urges that those scenarios which would have a negative impact on Yellowhead School Division be deleted from any future consideration.

Firstly, Yellowhead School Division is fundamentally opposed to fragmentation of rural school jurisdictions. It is our position that larger jurisdictions can achieve economies of scale that make a significant contribution to a more effective and more efficient delivery of school and education services. Larger jurisdictions are able, by virtue of their size, to deliver a greater breadth and depth of programming than can smaller jurisdictions. This has been demonstrated in a number of studies such as the Alberta School Trustees' Association report on Small Separate School Districts, the Department of Education Report on the feasibility of two high schools in Edson, and the Nichols Applied Management feasibility study regarding the formation of a Hinton based school division.

Additionally, the cost of administering two jurisdictions is greater than the cost of administering one larger unit. The need for an acceptable level of duplicate services in two small jurisdictions creates a drain on resources, further restricting program offerings.

From the point of view of the Yellowhead School Division, the preferred course of action in this entire matter is to maintain the status quo with the Drayton Valley area dissidents addressing their concerns through the government of the County of Parkland.

In terms of the report itself, Yellowhead School Division has a number of concerns. The Division feels that it is heavily biased toward a county system. The report starts with the premise that a county system is the only alternative then proceeds to examine a number of scenarios to try to attach enough assessment to make the proposed county viable. Recent studies by the Province and by the

Alberta School Trustees' Association dealing with the review of the County Act indicate that alternate methods of delivering educational services should be given consideration. In its present form, the report appears to ignore all aspects of the educational system except school utilization and assessment.

Secondly, the Division feels that the distribution of the report has been restricted and there has not been sufficient opportunity by affected jurisdictions to react to the proposals. For example, the Towns of Hinton and Edson would be severly impacted by some of the scenarios being considered (see table 6 - 6) but have apparently not been included in what has been defined as "affected jurisdictions".

The various scenarios described in the report regarding the extent of the proposed county are all objectionable to Yellowhead School Division and all except options A/B are completely unacceptable to the Division.

It is the view of Yellowhead School Division that if the Drayton Valley dissidents wish to form their own municipal government, they should do so within the present boundaries of the County of Parkland. There is no justification for allowing the "new" county to encroach on existing jurisdictions simply to attach enough assessment to make it viable.

In particular, the southeast and east portions of Improvement District 14 contain heavy concentrations of assessment and Yellowhead School Division uses that assessment base to equalize educational services and opportunity across the Improvement District. Allowing the "new" county to attach the part of Improvement District 14 with abundant assessment would be a devastating blow for the balance of the Improvement District and for the Towns of Hinton and Edson.

A 1.2.2.-1

TOWN OF HINTON
Office Of The Mayor
Box 818, Hinton, Alberta T0E 1B0
Telephone (403) 865-2217

February 24, 1986

The Hon. Julian G. Koziak
Minister for Municipal Affairs
224 Legislature Building
EDMONTON, Alberta
T5K 2B6

Dear Sir:

RE: DRAYTON VALLEY AREA MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

Having received the "Draft" of the above noted study, we do have several concerns.

Any of the proposed scenarios that decrease the assessment base of Improvement District #14 do impact on the town of Hinton. This impact is in the area of requisitions which are levied by several different bodies and primarily the Yellowhead School Division.

It has been suggested that increases of up to 20% could occur in the dollar amount levied against the individual urban municipalities within Improvement District #14. This amount of an increase is unacceptable at any time much less during the existing economic climate.

Any erosion of the tax base of I.D. #14 would surely effect adversely the economic viability of their proposed incorporation

As it exists, I.D. #14 could and likely should become an incorporated municipal entity. With the Yellowhead School Division having actual or approximately co-terminous boundaries the transition is reasonable.

We do not feel that a new rural municipality should be formed at the expense of and at the detriment to an existing viable entity.

Cont'd..../2

The Hon. Julian G. Koziak
Re: Drayton Valley Area Municipal Feasibility Study
February 24, 1986

PAGE TWO

It is regretted that we were not involved in the preparation of the study, nor were we part of the original circulation list. We would be greatly effected by any loss of assessment to I.D. #14 and feel the Channels of Communication between the Provincial Government department and the local Municipal Government have again been neglected.

May we anticipate that our Municipality will be consulted and allowed input before any further action or discussion is made.

Yours very truly,
TOWN OF HINTON

Jean a Davidson

Jean A. Davidson
Mayor

JAB/emf

cc: Mayor Ron J. Linford
Town of Edson

A. Jorgenson, Chairman
Advisory Board
Improvement District #14

Ian Wight
Alberta Municipal Affairs
Policy and Research

A 1.2.3.-1

EDSON

Town of Edson

P O BOX 1388
EDSON, Alberta, Canada
T0E 0P0 (403) 723-4401

Edson 1986
Alberta Winter Games

February 17th 1986.

Hon. Julian G. J. Koziak
Minister for Municipal Affairs
224 Legislature Building
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2B6

Dear Sir:

DRAYTON VALLEY AREA MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

We have reviewed the above study and we are very concerned over the possible impact of this proposal on the ratepayers of not only the Town of Edson but all of Improvement District No. 14.

Our first concern is for the supplementary school requisition of the Yellowhead School District. Should the new separate municipality include a portion of Improvement District No. 14, the supplementary requisitions will increase in excess of twenty percent. An additional burden on an economy that is already suffering.

Our second concern is for the future of Improvement District No. 14. We support their endeavours for incorporation and we are opposed to any infringement on their assessment base which could ultimately affect incorporation.

We are not opposed to the development of a new separate local government in the Drayton Valley area provided that it does not encompass any portion of the Improvement District No. 14.

In conclusion, we question why this report was not made available to us when it was released initially as we will be affected. We only received a copy after it was requested in late January - does the Department of Municipal Affairs feel that the Town of Edson will not be affected?

A 1.2.3.-2

It is our understanding that a second draft of the report will be made available prior to any decision and we urge you to give everyone ample time for input prior to any decision being made.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours very truly,

Ron J. Linford
Mayor.

:sa

c.c. Mayor Jean Davidson
Town of Hinton

A. Jorgensen, Chairman
Advisory Board
Improvement District No. 14

A 1.2.4.-1

VILLAGE OF WILDWOOD
Box 216
Wildwood, Alberta
TOE 2MO 325-3790

February 6, 1986

Ian Wight, Manager
Alberta Municipal Affairs
Policy & Research
9925 - 107 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2H9

Dear Sir:

Re: Drayton Valley Area Municipal Feasibility Study

The Council of the Village of Wildwood endorse I.D. #14's response to the above named study. We take exception to the expansion of the Drayton Valley area into I.D. #14 because we feel that expansion will result in reduced assessment in the I.D. and ultimately a higher tax burden to those municipalities within the I.D.

Further, the proposed ultimate expansion to include the Chip Lake area is also unacceptable. We feel that inclusion in the Drayton Valley area rather than in the I.D. would mean major municipal disruptions for our Village as well as an even greater tax burden on our residents with no improved services.

No where in the report are arguments presented that would indicate any benefit to any municipality other than Drayton Valley.

We prefer to remain a municipality within the PRESENT I.D. boundaries.

Yours truly,

G. M. Engley

Gail M. Engley
Secretary-Treasurer
for Village Council

cc Peter Trynchy, MLA

FEB 12

A 1.2.5.-1

Village of Evansburg

4907 - 50th Street, P.O. Box 39, Evansburg, Alberta TOE OTO
Phone: 727-3551

March 7 1986

Mr. Ian Wight
Manager - Policy & Research
Alberta Municipal Affairs
9925 - 107 Street
Edmonton Alberta
T5K 2H9

Dear Mr. Wight,

re: DRAYTON VALLEY AREA MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

The Council of the Village of Evansburg and the majority of concerned Village and ID #14 residents who attended a special meeting held in the Evansburg Legion Hall on Friday, February 21 1986 regarding the above Study, overwhelmingly endorse I.D. #14's response to the Drayton Valley area Municipal Feasibility Study. Exception is taken to the expansion of the Drayton Valley area into I.D. #14 because it will mean a reduced assessment in the I.D. which will inevitably result in a higher tax burden to all those municipalities within the I.D.

In simple terms what the expansion will mean to the Village of Evansburg will be higher residential taxes, higher school taxes, higher business taxes, which will discourage new businesses locating in this area, fewer services etc.

In other words there would be no benefit for Evansburg or for that matter any other municipality other than Drayton Valley.

We wish to remain a municipality within the present I.D. #14 boundaries.

Yours truly,

Fred Ledinski

Fred Ledinski,
Mayor,
Village of Evansburg

mem

cc: Peter Trynchy, MLA

MAR 11 1986

A 2.1.1.-1

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
County of Leduc No. 25

Administration Office
4301 - 50 Street
Leduc, Alberta
T9E 2X3

Telephone 986-2251

January 27, 1986

The Hon. Julian Koziak
Minister of Municipal Affairs
224 Legislature Building
EDMONTON, Alberta
T5K 2B6

Dear Sir:

RE: Drayton Valley Area Municipal Feasibility Study

The Council of the County of Leduc No. 25 have recently had the opportunity to review the preliminary draft of the "Drayton Valley Area Municipal Feasibility Study" as prepared by Alberta Municipal Affairs. In this respect, we feel it is appropriate to advise you of the position of our Council on the matter of a new municipality as proposed to include a portion of the County of Leduc.

Very simply, the Council do not favour the severance of the County of Leduc through the incorporation of a new "Drayton Valley Area" municipality. We support retaining the extreme western portion of our County for a number of reasons.

1. A major physical boundary, the North Saskatchewan River, currently establishes the western limits of the County of Leduc, providing for logical servicing from the east.

2. Municipal services are effectively provided from a major County Municipal Shop, centrally located in the Thorsby area of the County.

3. The County has continually made changes within the Public Works Department to better accommodate a consistent level of services. The most recent occurrence in this regard has involved a major restructuring of the Public Works Department and the establishment of the position of Superintendent of Public Works, resulting in a positive affect on addressing servicing demands throughout the County. Supplying municipal services on the basis of need has become the progressive philosophy of Council.

/2. . .

Hon. Julian Koziak
January 27, 1986 Page 2

In summary, the Council of the County of Leduc are of the opinion that the existing County, as a whole, is a notably viable unit. We are able and willing to provide a satisfactory level of service to all residents within our jurisdiction and, therefore, wish to have the opportunity to do so.

Yours very truly

Norman Bittner

NORMAN BITTNER
Reeve

NB/lh

~~cc:~~ Mr. I. Wight, Alberta Municipal Affairs

A 2.1.2.-1

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY TREASURER
County of Leduc No. 25

Administration Office
4301 - 50 Street
Leduc, Alberta
T9E 2X3

Telephone 986-2251

February 24, 1986

The Hon. Julian Koziak
Minister of Municipal Affairs
224 Legislature Building
EDMONTON, Alberta
T5K 2B6

Dear Sir:

RE: Drayton Valley Area Municipal Feasibility Study

Attached please find a copy of the February 24, 1986 news release prepared by the Council of the County of Leduc No. 25 as supporting documentation for retaining the existing County boundaries. This news release will be used for general distribution to affected residents and will also be published as an advertisement in the February 25, 1986 issue of The Leduc Representative.

Yours very truly

Original Signed
FRED A. ROLOF

FRED A. ROLOF
Secretary-Treasurer

FAR/lh
Att. (1)

Mr. Ian Wight - Alberta Municipal Affairs ✓

News Release - February 24, 1986

An information notice provided by the Council of the County of Leduc No. 25 on the matter of a proposed Drayton Valley Area Municipality.

The Council of the County of Leduc No. 25 have reviewed the preliminary draft of the "Drayton Valley Area Municipal Feasibility Study" as prepared by Alberta Municipal Affairs. The Council favours retaining the existing County boundaries rather than a new configuration with the western portion of the County being incorporated into a new "Drayton Valley Area" municipality.

The following is a factual summary of information compiled for consideration by all County of Leduc residents in a position to be affected by the potential boundary adjustments noted in the feasibility study:

1. A major physical boundary, the North Saskatchewan River, currently establishes the western limits of the County of Leduc, providing for logical servicing from the east.

2. Public Works services are effectively provided from a major County Municipal Shop, centrally located in the Thorsby area of the County.

3. The County Council has, over the years made changes within the Public Works Department to reflect its progressive philosophy of providing a consistent level of service throughout the County on the basis of need. The most recent change involved combining the former two area units, into one County unit and the appointment of a Public Works Superintendent.

4. Most of the major roadway networks within the study area of the County, have been upgraded through the positive, co-operative efforts of the County and Alberta Transportation.

5. The County has very significant expenditures in the Public Works area, much of which may not be generally recognized. Specifically, notable contributions are made for the acceleration of the overall Secondary Road Upgrading Program as well as major drainage and erosion correction projects throughout the County.

6. The Agriculture Services Department offers a comprehensive program varying from that of serving an advisory roll for our diversified farming community to that of performing and promoting control of a variety of both weeds and pests. (eg. Grasshopper spraying).

7. The County has for some 20 years, participated with the Towns and Villages in the delivery of a Family and Community Support Services program (formerly Preventative Social Services). The Council believes the program is accommodating needs of the playschool tots, teenagers, parents and the elderly throughout the County.

/2 . . .

8. Tri-County Emergency Medical (1981) Services Ltd., with operational funding cost-shared by the County and local urban municipalities, provides an exceptional ambulance service to County residents. This service operates out of hospital based locations in both Breton and Leduc.

9. The County is currently an active participant in the Drayton Valley Regional Sanitary Landfill Authority which provides an environmentally safe method for refuse disposal.

10. The Council also supports, either through financial assistance programs or otherwise:

    a) the Drayton Valley Association for the Developmentally Handicapped,
    b) the Rural Fire Protection Associations,
    c) the Regional Parks and Recreation Boards,
    d) the Seed Cleaning Co-operatives in the Leduc and Warburg regions, and
    e) the Senior Citizens Foundation operating the Leduc and Warburg manors.

Council believe that the County of Leduc No. 25 provides equitable and quality service to the western portion of the County. It is also important to recognize that the present County Councillors representing electoral divisions 6 and 7 of the County are very conscientious and diligent in conveying the needs of the local residents.

The County of Leduc No. 25 is willing and able to continue to provide a satisfactory level of service to all it's residents and wish to have the the opportunity to do so.

Respectfully Submitted

Council,
County of Leduc No. 25

A 2.2.1.-1

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
County of Leduc No. 25

Administration Office
4301 - 50 Street
Leduc, Alberta
T9E 2X3

Telephone 986-2251

January 15, 1986

Mr. Ian Wight,
Manager,Policy and Research,
Municipal Services Branch,
Department of Municipal Affairs,
Jarvis Building,
9925 - 107 Street,
EDMONTON, Alberta.
T5K 2H9

Dear Mr. Wight:

Enclosed is the County of Leduc Board of Education response to the Drayton Valley Area Municipal Feasibility Study - Preliminary Main Report.

We would welcome any questions you might have related to this document.

Yours truly,

Albert L Klapstein

Albert L. Klapstein,
Chairman,
Board of Education.

ALK:jcg

c.c. Breton Village Council,
Mr. J. Koziak, Minister of Municipal Affairs,
Mr. D. King, Minister of Education,
Mrs. S. Cripps, M.L.A., Drayton Valley Constiuency.

COUNTY OF LEDUC BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMENTS REGARDING THE DRAYTON VALLEY MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

The Board of Education of the County of Leduc objects to the inclusion of any portion of our County in the proposed Drayton Valley County. Below are a number of observations related to the proposal:

1. At a recent meeting of the Board, a decision was made to negotiate an agreement between the Village of Breton and the Board to permit the Village of Breton to construct a swimming pool and attach it to the high school. By so doing, the Board reaffirmed its faith in maintenance of the high school in the community. There would be a definite possibility that Breton High school would close if it became part of the new County (See p.5-3 and 5-4 of the Report).

2. Academic results on Government examinations in all three schools - Breton Elementary, Breton Junior-Senior High and Lindale are good and continue to improve. The Board has made a determined effort to provide good resources - both physical and human - in order to make these results possible.

3. Pupil-teacher ratio remains low in all three schools. In Lindale, the present ratio is 1 teacher to 16.7 students: in Breton Elementary the rate is 1 teacher to 16.7 students and in Breton Junior-Senior High the ratio is 1 teacher to 14.5 students. The Board has maintained this low pupil:teacher ratio in order to provide excellent academic instruction and allow time for teachers to deal with individual deficiencies of students.

4. A wide variety of services is being provided in the schools including the following:

    a. Band program in Lindale and Breton Junior-Senior High School.

    b. Resource teachers to assist students experiencing reading problems are employed in all three schools.

    c. Special education classes are operated in all three schools

    d. Computers have been placed in all schools. A computer specialist has been employed on a half-time basis in Breton Elementary.

    e. Trainable mentally handicapped students and academic-occupational students are accommodated in a neighboring school.

    f. Skating rinks are maintained in two of the schools - Lindale and Breton Elementary.

.... 2

5. We agree that it is necessary to fully explore the many potential problems inherent in forming a new educational unit before a decision to form a new system is made. To simply say the system is viable economically is not enough. All factors must be considered. Such a review ought to involve Alberta Education.

6. There has been a concerted, consistent effort to continue to improve the educational system in the the three schools. It is also true that municipal authorities have served the area well.

7. The entire area outlined on map 2-1 certainly does not primarily trade in Drayton Valley. Some parts of the areas might very well do so. However, it is very questionable to assume that the residents of the eastern part of the defined area trade primarily in Drayton Valley.

8. It is apparent from parent support of the Breton schools that the area east of Buck Lake Creek and south of Highway 39 is strongly in favor of staying in the County of Leduc school system (See p.5-3). It is also apparent that parents of students in Lindale school attendance area are strongly supportive of their school. Before a decision is reached it is important to determine the will of the people in the affected areas.

9. We anticipate that the Genesee Power Plant will be coming on stream in the near future. It seems reasonable that the residents of the western area of the County benefit from the taxation monies that will result from the plant's operation.

10. The North Saskatchewan River provides a natural, logical boundary. Only one bridge connects the area to Drayton Valley.

11. Many of the residents in the defined area have an affinity to the area east of them. While many of the area residents trade in Drayton Valley, most of them, historically, have social, religious and cultural ties to the east.

12. Most residents are proud of their schools and the educational opportunities provided by our Board.

13. Our Board and administration are, in turn, proud of the western schools, their students, their staffs. We have a demonstrated commitment to the continued improvement of the schools.

... 3

We, further, have concerns regarding the following:

1. The long-range economic viability of the proposed County is questionable.

2. If the new County includes any area of our County it will affect the three schools in the western part of our County. (Refer to our July 25, 1985 submission).

3. It is questionable if the new County could provide the high level of service presently provided by our County. The high degree of servicing is acknowledged several times in your Report.

4. The proven commitment of our Board and administration to constant improvement of the schools must be considered when discussing the feasibility of a new County. Disrupting a sound, viable system appears to make little sense

In conclusion, our Board seriously questions the wisdom of including any portion of our County in the new system.

Respectfully submitted,

BOARD OF EDUCATION,
COUNTY OF LEDUC #25.

A 2.2.2.-1

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
County of Leduc No. 25

Administration Offic
4301 - 50 Street
Leduc, Alberta
T9E 2X3

Telephone 986-2251

AN OPEN MESSAGE FROM THE COUNTY OF LEDUC BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ALL RESIDENTS WHO MIGHT BE AFFECTED BY THE POSSIBLE FORMATION OF A MUNICIPAL AND/OR SCHOOL AUTHORITY IN THE DRAYTON VALLEY AREA

During 1985 a study researching the feasibility of the formation of a new municipality in the Drayton Valley area was undertaken by Alberta Municipal Affairs. It is the view and position of our Board of Education that none of our school jurisdiction should be removed from us. It is our belief that we are meeting the educational needs of our students with care and quality and because we care we do not wish to lose any of them.

The Board believes it is important that a number of items be brought to your attention, including the following:

1. At a recent meeting of the Board, a decision was made to negotiate an agreement between the Village of Breton and the Board to permit the Village of Breton to construct a swimming pool and attach it to the high school. By so doing, the Board reaffirmed its faith in maintenance of the high school in the community. There would be a definite possibility that Breton High School would close if it became part of the new system.

2. Academic results on Government examinations in all three schools - Breton Elementary, Breton Junior-Senior High and Lindale are good and continue to improve. The Board has made a determined effort to provide good resources - both physical and human - in order to make these results possible.

3. Pupil-teacher ratio remains low in all three schools. In Lindale, the present ratio is 1 teacher to 16.7 students; in Breton Elementary the ratio is 1 teacher to 16.7 students and in Breton Junior-Senior High School the ratio is 1 teacher to 14.5 students. This compares to an overall provincial average of 1 teacher to 20 students. The Board has maintained this low teacher:pupil ratio in order to provide excellent academic instruction and allow time for teachers to deal with individual deficiencies of students. Another benefit of the low teacher:pupil ratio is that it allows teachers and students to make excellent use of science laboratories, and other auxiliary spaces.

4. A wide variety of services is being provided in the schools including the following:

   a. A Music program operates in all three schools.
   b. Resource teachers to assist students experiencing reading problems are employed in all three schools.
   c. Special education classes are operated in all three schools.
   d. Computer programs are operating in all schools. A computer specialist has been employed on a half-time basis in Breton Elementary. The number of computers made available to students in our schools continues to grow. For instance, in Breton High School, there are 18 computers or one computer for every 9 students. This compares to one for every 20 students in Alberta schools, generally. United States has 1 computer for every 75 students.
   e. Skating rinks are maintained in two of the schools -- Lindale and Breton Elementary.
   f. Gate service is provided to all rural students being transported to school.
   g. Our schools belong to the Central Alberta Media Services (CAMS). This service makes available a tremendous array of films, filmstrips and video cassettes.
   h. Excellent library services, managed by a teacher-librarian and an aide, are provided in all schools. While most school systems have reduced services by eliminating the position of teacher-librarian, our County has maintained its high level of service by continuing to employ teacher-librarians. We also belong to the Yellowhead Regional Library. The membership provides access to a very advanced system of library service.

.. 2

A 2.2.2.-2

DRAYTON VALLEY,
Continued Page 2

5. We believe that it is necessary to fully explore the many potential problems inherent in forming a new educational unity before a decision to form a new system is made. To simply say the system is viable economically is not enough. All factors must be considered. Such a review ought to involve Alberta Education.

6. There has been a concerted, consistent effort to continue to improve the educational system in the three schools. It is also true that municipal authorities have served the area well.

7. We anticipate that the Genesee Power Plant will be coming on stream in the near future. The taxes that will result will be of great benefit to the entire County, including the western portion.

8. As part of the five-year plan for improvement of our schools the following projects are included in our submission to Alberta Education:

   In 1987 - Breton High school will be modernized. The project is being timed so as to include the proposed swimming pool.

   In 1987 - Lindale School will be modernized.

   In 1988 - Breton Elementary (old wing) will be modernized.

   If a new system comes into being, will that system be willing or able to carry on these projects? It seems unlikely that these projects would proceed for many years, if at all!

9. Through your cooperation and support you have demonstrated pride in your schools. Our Board and administration are, in turn, proud of the western schools, their students, their staffs. We have a demonstrated commitment to the continued improvement of the schools.

We, further, have concerns regarding the following:

1. The long-range economic viability of the proposed system is questionable.

2. If the new system includes any area of our County it will affect the three schools in the western part of our County. The threat of closure of Lindale School and the Breton High School would be very real. Such a closure would be a serious blow to your communities.

3. It is doubtful if the new system, especially in the early years of its operation, could provide the high level of service presently provided by our County.

4. The commitment demonstrated by our Board and administration to constant improvement of the schools must be considered when discussing the feasibility of a new system. Disrupting a sound, viable County appears to make little sense.

In conclusion, our Board seriously questions the wisdom of including any portion of our County in the new system.

Respectfully,

BOARD OF EDUCATION,
COUNTY OF LEDUC NO. 25

A 2.3.1.-1

BRETON

VILLAGE OF BRETON, P.O. BOX 480, BRETON, ALBERTA T0C 0P0 TELEPHONE: 696-3636

February 11, 1986

The Honorable Julian Koziak
Minister of Municipal Affairs
224 Legislature Building
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2B6

Dear Honorable Julian Koziak;

Re: Drayton Valley Area Municipal Feasibility Study

Please find enclosed the Village of Breton response to the Drayton Valley Area Municipality Feasibility Study.

We would request that you carefully read our concerns and note particularly point 9 on page 14. We desire your committment to not allow this proposed local government to be hastened through Cabinet. Further, we strongly recommend that each area affected be allowed local plebescites i.e. lesser area of County of Leduc separated from those included in the greater area of the County of Leduc separated from the municipality of Breton.

While we recognize residents bordering the county line use Drayton Valley, we believe the County of Leduc can provide an adequate level of service.

We also have grave concerns that the high amount of power and pipeline assessment will give people false hope in their expectations of a new county. In fact, it has already. The mention of money, with no consideration to other parameters has clouded the proposed county issue and brought to the forefront the human characteristic that "handouts" are easier to attain than their involvement.

In speaking to people who have not read the study, it is interesting to note their comment is "but it will be such a rich county!" It concerns the Council that wealth is based on oil/gas industry. Too soon, people have forgotten what it was like in Drayton Valley only three years ago. With oil prices decreasing, it is ludicrous to think of establishing a county based primarily on oil assessment.

We further recommend the government make a decision on the provincial distribution of power and pipeline assessment before allowing the formation of a new county. Moreover, in-depth research of all parameters involved must be accomplished and published prior to any decision.

We further recognize the political clout of our qualified MLA and request her desires to resolve the issue prior to the next provincial election not influence the expediency of Cabinet's decision. There seems to be a sense of urgency on this matter. How can one decide when all factors are not known?

Your consideration of our concerns is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Strand

Carolyn Strand, B.Sc., L.G.A.
Municipal Administrator

c.c. Ian Wight

Shirley Cripps

A 2.3.2.-1

VILLAGE OF BRETON

RESPONSE
TO

THE DRAYTON VALLEY AREA
MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

FEBRUARY 1986

VILLAGE OF BRETON COMMENTS REGARDING THE DRAYTON VALLEY MUNICIPAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

Based upon the information provided in the Drayton Valley Municipal Feasibility Study, the Breton Village Council objects to any portion of the County of Leduc being included in the proposed Drayton Valley county.

Breton is a viable economic unit with strong community support and is opposed to any policy or action that would be detrimental to its well-being.

According to the study, all three forms of proposed government would benefit Drayton Valley and no assurance was given to Breton's longevity. Breton has concern that the boundaries of any proposed government not infringe upon it's sphere of influence.

The first part of this brief will address some history and describe some strong eastern ties that have successfully developed and are extremely important to the Village's daily operation. To sever these eastern ties would place Breton's district in a tenuous position with a fledgling county. While there have been some normal obstacles in the process of service delivery, the County of Leduc has had an overall positive influence in this region.

Based upon the information in Part I, the second part deals in-depth with Breton's serious concerns.

PART I

Breton is basically an agricultural centre with many services provided to the area:

Protective Services

1. A four-member R.C.M.P. detachment serves a broad territory including most of the western ends of the Counties of Leduc and Wetaskiwin. Our Provincial Court House facility assists in the administration of justice.

2. Breton & Rural Fire Protection Association provides efficient service to Breton and rural members as far west as Carnwood, Buck Creek and Lindale. The Rural Fire Associations across the County of Leduc lobbied the Council for rural fire protection assistance. Each Fire Association currently receives $ 5,000 annually. Since 1976, Breton & Rural Fire Protection Association has received $ 54,000 from the County of Leducl Mutual fire protection between municipalities has the sanction of the Breton, Devon, Thorsby and Warburg Councils.

3. Peacetime Mutual Aid agreements are in place with the County of Leduc No. 25, the Towns of Calmar and Devon, the City of Leduc, the Village of Beaumont, New Sarepta, Thorsby and Warburg.

Environmental Health Services

1. By-laws are in place providing for the entering into agreement among: the Villages of Thorsby, Warburg, Breton, the Summer Villages of Argentia Beach, Golden Days, Itaska Beach and Sundance Beach, and the County of Leduc No. 25 for the joint construction, ownership, maintenance and operation of a solid waste management and disposal system. During the proposed site selection phase, the new Drayton Valley Regional Sanitary System was discussed and found to be too costly to Breton for length of haul and site operation and even more costly for other municipalities located east of Breton. The Thorsby Regional system requires Breton and area population as participants to be a feasible unit and, of course, Breton will choose the system that has the least adverse financial effect.

Public Health & Welfare Services

1. The Village is very active in the County of Leduc F.C.S.S. program. Along with other municipalities, Breton has started its own particular program called F.A.C.T., Warburg's is F.C.P., Thorsby's is F.A.C.E. and Calmar's is S.C.A.T.. Meetings are held regularly across the County and ties are strengthened by being involved with this preventative program. The sharing of knowledge and working toward a common goal, reduces duplication of programs. We are aware that Drayton Valley has had various problems with this service. Breton & area appreciates the co-ordinated, organized

County of Leduc leadership.

2. The Social Services and Community Health Office serves our area from the Leduc District Office for the majority of cases. The Drayton Valley Office is involved with only the court system-Community Service Program.

3. An ambulance is stationed in Breton and receives its authority from the Leduc & Area Ambulance Board. Less than four years ago, the Breton area was associated with the Drayton Valley Ambulance Board. Being concerned about Drayton's response time and quality of service, both the County of Wetaskiwin and Leduc requested to leave that ambulance authority and join Leduc. For years, Breton had asked the Drayton Valley Ambulance authority to place a unit at the Breton hospital to decrease response time and increase service. As soon as Breton joined the Leduc authority, an ambulance was placed at Breton Hospital and is demonstrating its location is necessary to the saving of lives. Breton is very satisfied with this arrangement.

4. Breton falls under the Leduc/Strathcona Health Unit Office and has received more than adequate service over the years.

5. The medical service in Breton boasts of a 30-bed active treatment hospital, 2 doctors, 1 dentist, 1 denturist, a pharmacist and a proposed physiotherapy clinic. It must be emphasized that while some residents use the Drayton Valley services, a large majority use Breton's facilities. The remaining choose to travel to Edmonton, Leduc or Wetaskiwin. Thirty-four per cent of Breton's population is over 50 years of age and therefore, appreciate the close proximity to excellent medical services.

   While it may be true that some residents used the Drayton Valley hospital during Breton's doctor shortage, it must be stressed that these two occurrences were very short-lived. Further, the media did exaggerate the situation.

   The total medical service is important to the village because it is a major employer for our residents and attracts new people to rural country living. We would be opposed to losing the status of active treatment. There is a need for extended and nursing care and Breton's position is to construct the necessary wing. Consider that Breton's Hospital was originally designed for that purpose. Some thought should be given to the war babies reaching 65 years of age.

There will be a need for both Breton and Drayton Valley to retain their present facilities and expand each facility in the future. The current Breton Hospital utilization figures indicate a definite increase. With close liason among the hospital, pharmacist and dentist, our residents appreciate this co-ordinated medical availability.

Planning & Development Services

1. Edmonton Regional Planning Commission boundaries were reduced to an area described as metropolitan in nature. The new Yellowhead Regional Planning Commission was to incorporate the west end of the County of Leduc. The three villages of Breton, Warburg and Thorsby; the Summer Villages of Golden Days, Itaska Beach, Sundance Beach; and a portion of the County of Leduc No. 25 requested to be excluded from the Y.R.P.C. Since our area was more agriculturally oriented than natural resource related, we had more in common with the Battle River Regional Planning Commission. We were approved to join the Battle River Regional Planning Commission and have one representative for the three villages serving on the Commission in Wetaskiwin. Their expertise and management have greatly assisted our planning and development. We have never regretted this move. Should Breton be included in the new county, there is a good possibility we would be placed back under the Y.R.P.C. since the majority of the new county would be in that jurisdiction. Battle River Regional Planning Commission has the highest reputation in the province for level of service and we strongly desire to continue this association.
2. For the past five years, Breton, Thorsby, and Warburg Village Councils have met on a regular basis to discuss and share common goals and concerns. This interaction is invaluable as it overcomes rivalry and introduces mutual support. That close rapport was established because

the Villages have close proximity, are about the same size, and are agriculturally-based. Therefore, each village relates quite well to the nature of the others' problems. We do not want to lose this meaningful interaction. Breton and Drayton Valley have not historically co-operated in this fashion.

3. The study discusses the services of the Drayton Valley district agriculturist. To our understanding, the majority of the people would choose Leduc, Rimbey or Wetaskiwin but were directed to the Drayton Valley Office. This change in office location placed a burden on some established habits and forced people to go to Drayton Valley just for District Agriculturist business. This is not good time management. Therefore, from necessity, and not by choice, farmers use the Drayton Valley District Agriculturist office. Page 7-37 recognizes Agricultural Service Board operation has a minority appeal. That would indicate the service is not being used as often as indicated on page 2-3.

   Breton definitely exists as an agricultural service centre for our area while Drayton is perceived as an oil town (p.5-5). As stated, agriculture servicing is following oil/gas servicing in Drayton Valley. One would question how quickly agriculture would follow when the entire agricultural industry across North America is in a depressed state. The grey-wooded soil in the proposed county is marginal and farming too costly; to depend upon agriculture for stability is presumptuous.

   Some of Breton's agricultural services are: grain elevators, 2 farm fuel outlets, 3 farm goods suppliers, one feed and fertilizer supplier, veternarian service and we are close to Martin Farm Equipment in Warburg or the Case and International dealership in Thorsby. Further, Wetaskiwin is a primary service centre for many farmers.

Recreaton/Culture Services

The area is comprised of facilities located in Breton and 6 rural halls scattered throughout the region. A Regional Recreation Board administers all recreation/culture policy and financial matters. They advocate no duplication of service and use the arenas at Winfield and Warburg.

The West-End Swimming Pool Society has seen the need for a pool and has begun to raise funds for the project. With the support of the County of Leduc School Board, the neighboring schools of Alder Flats, Winfield, Warburg, Lindale and Thorsby, the pool is assured of success. Already, there is limited time in Leduc's pool and with the expected increase in population for Drayton Valley, that pool will soon be used to capacity. A swimming pool feasibility study has been prepared by the society and is available for information. Careful planning has preceeded the decision and the Society has the support of the village council. The Breton & District Regional Recreation and Parks Board has given support in principle to the pool concept.

The pool project is not a "fearful reaction" to being usurped by Drayton Valley as indicated in the Drayton Valley study. There has been a need for a major facility in Breton and there was no reason to duplicate facilities already existing in Winfield and Warburg. The West-End Swimming Pool Society felt the pool would be the best recreation facility to serve all age levels and at the same time promote water safety training. Further, this appeared to be the opportune time to take advantage of a major renovation project scheduled for the Breton High School in 1987. Schools are far too expensive to build and maintain to be sitting idle up to 50% of the time. By making use of the school change-rooms and showers, the project cost is reduced $ 200,000.

The Village of Breton, although not spear-heading the pool project, envisions more unity in the area resulting from this focus on a program to which all can relate. Letters of support from schools and recreation boards are documented in the swimming pool study.

The boundaries of the regional recreation board extend approximately 3 miles east of Highway 12 to the North Saskatchewan River. These boundaries are in fact, arbitary and residents are free to cross them to participate elsewhere in activities suitable to their needs. Information received from the western representatives to the Board indicate that while some Berrymoor, Buck Creek and Lindale residents support Breton, the majority adjacent to the river, do participate in Drayton's programming. In the Board's dispersement of funds, it is therefore difficult to understand why the western representatives have not come to terms with their financial responsibility towards Drayton Valley. They prefer to retain any funds allocated to them for their community halls. It appears they receive benefits from both sides and are unable to make a choice because they do, in fact, still use their halls for leisure time.

After many years of time and effort, the County of Leduc agreed to the regional recreation board system which brought many advantages to our region. County tax dollars and provincial grants have helped develop and upgrade county rural halls and Breton facilities. Before the regional system was in place, the rural halls (Berrymoor, Buck Creek, Carnwood, Funnell, Lindale, New Moose Hall) received $ 600 as an annual grant from the county. The Village of Breton, since it was a municipality, could apply for the provincial operating grants. After the inception of the regional system, both the county and urban residents combined to form one board authority. Both parties now have access to county tax dollars and provincial grant money.

The County of Leduc has signed a three year agreement with the Village of Breton. This currently provides the Breton and District Regional Recreation and Parks Board with $ 19,100 county tax dollars and $28,480 provincial grant money per year from the County of Leduc. Breton spends it usual amount in excess of $ 80,000 for recreation and culture and gives the regional board $2,000 plus its provincial grant money in the amount of $ 8,010. The regional recreation board has a policy whereby it distributes the money to any club or organization requesting assistance. Since 1978, the rural halls have received a combined total of $ 204,872 while the Breton facilities have received $ 210,801.

Regional recreation has improved the quality of life for the west end of the County of Leduc. That numerous benefits are accredited to this system, the Breton Village Council advocates its continuance.

Education

A school is often the hub of activity in a small community. Therefore, when changes are proposed that indicate a possible loss of the school, residents become justifiably concerned. Moreover, a school is important to a community's viability for it helps form the very fibre and pulse of the region. It is comparable to an ecological system. If one entity is affected, the total system is affected. What happens in the county affects Breton; what happens in Lindale affects Breton.

Breton High School is operating at one-half capacity because a directive from the provincial government allowed 149 students from west of Buck Lake Creek to attend Drayton Valley AND at the expense of the County of Leduc. However, Breton is encouraged by the County of Leduc Board of Education, December 17, 1985 minutes that requested the administration investigate the feasibility of placing an express van from Buck Creek to Breton Schools for the 1986-87 school term. There are families who choose not to attend Drayton Valley and are currently driving their children to the Breton Elementary School. We believe Breton schools are becoming more attractive to Lindale and Buck Creek schools and a shift in our favor will be noticeable. The study(page 5-3 to 5-4) suggests centralization of the Breton senior high school to Drayton Valley or an eastward location. Page 5-5 indicates a small high school is a detrimental entity. Is a centralized high school better than a small high school? Is a Superstore better than a boutique? These are relative to one's priorities and biases.

The trend of the business industry is to small stores providing personal service. Large department stores are experiencing difficulties as a result of the many types of small stores coming into existence. What help to develop business trends are people's choices. Since it appears people prefer smaller units in business, do people also now value a smaller school unit? Perhaps the centralization pendulum is shifting.

Breton is proud of its small school. The residents of this area have already decided that Breton schools are important and we do not care to centralize anywhere. We appreciate the personal attention given to our students and this is exemplified by the number of Breton students receiving scholarships. We challenge the aspect that being small is a hindrance to one's education.

A philosophical side to this "small" trend may well be that people subjected to the electronic computer age are seeking personal contact with something tangible. For example, a teacher who knows the student and cares. After all, students really do not care how much a teacher

knows until they **know** how much the teacher **cares**!

Breton and Lindale operate as community schools and therefore, a strong sense of pride in the various accomplishments have been firmly entrenched in the areas' attitudes. The open-door policy and Further Education Courses now provided at Breton are new concepts bound to produce a positive image which will increase our school enrolment.

Economic Development

Breton's Economic Development Committee has been endeavoring to increase economic activity by promoting our low tax structure, land availability and business opportunities.

Four new businesses opened in 1985. These include a second grocery store, an accounting office, a second-hand store and a florist-craft shop. Three new highway commercial businesses are proposed for our newest subdivision in 1986. We look forward to this increased stimulation to our existing business section. We are acutely aware that our village requires a small industry to offer employment for our youth. Though possibilities offered at Genesee are coveted, we realize another form of employment is the impetus required to achieve stable growth. Breton is very protective of what has already been accomplished in this field. It's trading area coincides with the Breton District Hospital boundary. Winfield and Warburg are strongly influenced by Breton's commercial service. Page 2-5 and Map 2-1 indicates Drayton Valley's influence. It is very questionable how many, if any, residents from the Thorsby area trade primarily in Drayton Valley. There are others choices - Leduc, Red Deer, Wetaskiwin, Edmonton. The trend or habits of the people in the affected area have not changed since the 1971 Market Areas study prepared by Edmonton Regional Planning Commission. The trading influence of Drayton Valley falls sharply from the Buck Lake Creek eastward.

In summation on Part 1, the Breton Village Council cannot ignore the County of Leduc's positive influence on both urban and rural residents. Many hard, working people have already laid the foundation upon which we can build a better, stronger, stable and sensitive government. The hurdle has been jumped for us and all we need to do **is improve what we** already have! WHAT MORE DOES ONE WANT?

Breton will not tolerate any loss of existing County of Leduc services or other government associations. Traditionally, Breton has had eastern ties and the Council strongly desires their retention.

PART II

1. In reviewing Breton's relationships in all facets of service, we believe a detailed study must be undertaken to include more than economics before a change in counties is considered. Disrupting a sound system makes very little sense if one municipality risks the loss of its schools, current level of medical service and curtailment of its business and recreation activity. All political and educational ramifications require in-depth research to firmly establish what **benefits** will be accrued to the village and area by any proposed boundary change.

2. The question of the level of servicing roads in the new county was discussed. It should have been **emphasized** that higher costs are incurred for roads in a resource industry area than in an agricultural area. Heavy oil tankers and equipment travelling at higher rates of speed do more damage to roads than grain trucks and slow-moving farm equipment.

   Road maintenance involves a substantial expenditure in a county budget. In the proposed county, **unusual road demands** are addressed on Page 7-35. Roads have been a continuing concern in the west end of the County of Leduc. Will a new county meet the expectations of the residents? The study has addressed the high level of servicing the Leduc County provides showing that roads have improved greatly in the last three years.

   Again, would a new county with its resource industry located to the west of Drayton Valley maintain the roads in the region east of the North SaskatchewanRiver to the current level of servicing? **There is no guarantee this would be done.** Breton strongly holds that the new county would cater to the demands of the resource industry.

3. The study states there appears to be scope for almost doubling the farmed acreage. Does this take into account that grey-wooded soils are marginal soils and require more attention and maintenance than other types of farming soils? The increase may therefore not double. Farmland assessment is already of limited significance in the study areas and hence, the possible doubling effect would do little to greatly change the impact on the assessment base. This proposed county will of necessity depend upon oil and gas related assessment for its existence. A comparison is made of the proposed new county to 10 rural municipalities of which the majority are agriculturally based. The productivity of these 10 rural municipalities could not compare to the grey-wooded soil production. We must not compare apples with oranges! Even when the assessment base is primarily agriculture, with good farmland, the municipality struggles. Other rural municipalities with a resource industry in conjunction with agriculture, fare better financially. Obviously, one could not depend on agriculture as a stable future industry for the proposed county.

4. Page 5-24 references the expected eventual decline in conventional oil production. Has consideration been given to the decline occurring at a faster rate than expected? With Saudi Arabia's lower oil prices and new discoveries such as China's Oilfields, expensive Canadian oil will not be in high demand. The February 4, 1986 Channel 3 news carried the report that world oil prices are being forced down by the OPEC countries'lower production costs. Larger oil companies will be reducing their production because they cannot compete. Will exploration west of Drayton Valley continue as anticipated? Preparing for the future by building contingency reserves is a positive step but what happens when the reserves are depleted? Already, the Alberta government finds it necessary to use the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund. This fund was intended for the future and within a short time, the funds are being used!

5. The form of government that most concerns Breton is the unified urban/rural county system. The author of the study makes several favorable references to this system. The rural residents must be fully aware of the implications involved - Drayton Valley would dissolve its corporate structure and merge with the rural area to

form one local government for the entire region. They must know this form of government would govern both municipal and school affairs.

If Breton were the only municipality in a unified county system, our autonomy could be eroded.

It was interesting to hear that Sherwood Park is seeking city status and intends to include Refrinery Row in its assessment base. The remaining portion of Strathcona County will be divided between the County of Leduc and the County of Beaver.

Consider a future senario of the proposed Drayton Valley urban/rural county. Some years have passed and the "hamlet" of Drayton Valley has increased considerably in physical size and population. It has come to rely on the oil/gas assessment for its economics. It desires the prestige derived from city status. It becomes a city and includes within its boundaries all necessary assessment which assures its viabilty. What would be the effect on the area east of the North Saskatchewan River? Will they have to consider being placed back within the County of Leduc? If so, what then is the purpose of being involved with the proposed county in the first place? Think of the time and energy wasted being shifted back and forth.

If the traditional county form of government were chosen and Drayton Valley attained city status, what would be the effect on Breton if it were the only other municipality? It would likely not be positive.

The Municipal District which completely separates municipal and school authorities has some merit and appears to involve grass roots democracy. Any form of government should be "for the people by the people" but we all know this is impractical. The government process would become slower, causing more discontent. Instead, government officials assume a trustee role and handle matters according to their perception of what is best for the people. They make judgement calls based upon their interaction with the electorate.

The residents must fully understand not only how each form of of government operates but also the advantages and disadvantages of the alternatives.

6. Table 5-2 presents various configuration options for a new county. There should have been three more options included:

   I. Drayton Valley area of Parkland
   Town of Drayton Valley
   I.D. 14 (intermediate senario)
   Clearwater M.D.

   J. Option I
   +Wetaskiwin County

   K. Option I & J
   +Leduc County (lesser senario)

   The study information clearly indicates the proposed county could exist without Wetaskiwin and Leduc counties being included. Page 5-24 states all options A - H were assessed as viable and feasible local government units and hence Option I would be another viable unit and Breton strongly recommends the proposed county remain west of the North Saskatchewan River which is a good natural boundary.

   Increasing Option E from D doubles the area and leaves concern for level of servicing now and in the future.

7. Page 5-24 states there would be no major changes in municipal taxation rates for most taxpayers and that taxation should not be the only decisive factor. The cry of the western portion of the Leduc County was inequitable taxes paid for amount of road servicing received **but there is no guarantee that in a new county the tax rates would remain at the current level.**

   A good example is the Edmonton annexation of the Strathcona County south of Edmonton. The newly-annexed residents were told taxes would not change too much. Soon however, these people faced a three to four-fold tax increase even though Edmonton had a strong assessment base. Likewise, in our situation, depending upon the form of government chosen, the proposed county will be forced to substantially increase its assessment. **There is absolutely no guarantee that tax increases will not follow.**

8. Page 7-31 & 32 gives a very biased favorable description of Drayton Valley while referring to the outlying areas and small communities as being in Drayton Valley's "hinterland". This gives the connotation that everything but Drayton Valley is out in the "boon docks" away

from civilization. We object to that reference if that is what the author intended and request a better choice of words.

9. We insist that effort be made to adequately inform the public and after that localized plebescites be held to ascertain the will of the people. This new county cannot be railroaded through Cabinet. We request a sizeable block of time to educate the people.

10. Page 7-29 & 30 states that better relations could develop with Drayton Valley if Breton were included in the proposed county. Breton envisions Cynthia being expanded as a Drayton Valley satellite since it is located in the resource area and has more in common with Drayton Valley. The thrust will most likely be to a westward expansion and development.

    In the event of a county realignment, Breton would still offer personal service, attention and competitive prices. We do not desire the status of 'satellite' but instead, expect peaceful co-existence irrespective of county name.

11. Page 7-29 stated Breton effectively opted to pass up the opportunity to become involved in the oil servicing industry. This has been determined to be rumor. Breton was only a hamlet in the early 1950's and became incorporated January 1, 1957. Water and sewer servicing was installed to provide for the oil and gas servicing industry. Nothing appears in the council minutes to indicate that any industry was refused and there are no postulations as to why the industry settled further west. Therefore, the premise that Breton opted to pass up the opportunity should be taken out of the report.

12. Page 7-37 addresses the community school philosophy that Drayton Valley could attain. Breton and Lindale schools are already operating as community schools. **What more could a new county system offer?**

    Low utilization capacities is discussed on page 7-38. The County of Leduc has been very sensitive to the Breton situation for some time. The study states "the system (new county) would therefore have to be prepared to tolerate low utilization capacities in several areas". The County of Leduc has already accepted this tolerance. Further, **there is no guarantee the new system would tolerate low utilization capacities with regionalism being discussed.** It would be regressive if

Breton or Lindale lost what they have.

Page 7-38 discusses an innovative sharing of school equipment. The County of Leduc has progressed to school-based-budgeting which is more efficient and effective. Each school teacher has input into their particular budget and there is no better method than the "hands on" method.

Breton and Lindale will not tolerate their students being bussed to Drayton Valley on a part-time basis as the study indicates (p. 7-38).

The County of Leduc understands our feelings on centralization. We do not want to go through the convincing process again with a new county system, who could be unsympathetic to our requirements.

The Breton Elementary school has completed its modernization plan and the Breton High school has been approved to begin its modernization project in 1987. This plan fulfils the area's needs and expectations. Thousands of dollars have already been earmarked for our school and we would risk that for the unknown? A transfer in county status could jeopardize the completion of those plans as a new school authority could set other priorities. Knowing what we now have and soon will have makes it foolish for us to gamble it all, thereby placing ourselves in the potential loser's position.

13. The swimming pool project has the sanction of the County of Leduc Board of Education. Construction is scheduled for 1987 to coincide with the school modernization. Another school authority may not be as co-operative as the County of Leduc.

    The West-End Swimming Pool Society aspires to construct a pool to improve the quality of life to our residents whether they be in the County of Leduc, Parkland or Wetaskiwin. Being broad-minded, the Society has enjoined the aspect of complementing Drayton Valley's aquatic program. Theirs is a leisure pool; Breton's will have swimming lanes and a diving board. Both pools will serve useful unique purposes. **Therefore, any intentions to defer or cancel Breton's pool are totally unacceptable.**

14. Page 5-10 indicates Drayton Valley is concerned about cost-sharing

involving rural municipalities for various town facilities. **What would happen to Breton future facilities and the County of Leduc rural halls?** The Drayton Valley council must recognize that some of its decisions to build facilities assist in the marketing of its town and the benefits received are immeasurable. They should, therefore, not demand cost-sharing after the facilities are built but encourage cost-sharing prior to construction. The success of the town's other cost-sharing agreements is directly proportional to the input of all parties involved.

Cost-sharing is easier to facilitate with garbage, sewer, water etc., because everybody needs and uses these services. Therefore, per capita costs are established. In the area of recreation and culture, the defined calculated per capita method does not work. People choose where they wish to recreate. All their leisure time may be spent in the City of Edmonton. Why should they cost-share in a facility located in Drayton Valley?

If cost-sharing were enforced in a proposed county system, how would one equalize the amount paid between the person who uses the facility once a year to the person who uses the facility weekly? With water, sewer, garbage, everyone receives the same daily, weekly service. What will accurately determine who actually uses the facilities? Is it the total surrounding population or is it the same majority bordering the county boundaries?

The Breton Regional Recreation Board has been responsible for the construction of the Willey West Campground located at the Drayton Valley bridge. Regional recreation in its true form is evidenced with this project since benefits derived will enhance Drayton Valley and the west end of the County of Leduc. The Regional Board was perplexed by the Drayton Valley and County of Parkland board declension to assist with the campground.

Urban recreation service to rural people has been a contentious issue province-wide and the merits of cost-sharing should be seriously considered. Sometimes it is an advantage for a municipality to bear the most cost.

Residents, adjacent to county border lines, have the priviledge to use amenities in towns located in both counties. This is not a new problem to governments. Should one town's facilities be frequented more, that town is also receiving a stimulant to its business section. A strong, vibrant commercial service is the core asset to a town. If this were not so, why build facilities to attract people?

In conclusion, Breton Village Council would respectfully respond to a statement on page 1-1, "a feeling that the area would be better served with a local government." The seat of local government should never be a problem. If this is the main concern, people are oblivious to the real issue at stake - involvement - grass roots democracy - the very substance they feel is lacking! Grass roots democracy is available now - in the County of Leduc! **Government is the people** and if the people are not truly involved presently and are not consistently making concerted efforts to let government know their concerns, will these people become consistently involved in a new county system? It requires EFFORT to persuade government to any particular action or policy. That is the nature of the beast. Nevertheless, if by consistent action, the local area is improved, the purpose of grass roots democracy is accomplished. Moreover, the most effective, long-term changes originate internally.

Before looking across the river for what is perceived "a better deal", what involvement has taken place to improve the quality of life in the County of Leduc? To physically move a headquarters, with no change in attitude, will only transport the same problems to another space. A change for the sake of change in hopes of a better handout is not the action requisite to responsible, involved citizenry.

THERE WERE NO BENEFICIAL ABSOLUTES OR GUARANTEES ascribed to Breton or the County of Leduc residents in the study. As it was written in the context of establishing Drayton Valley as the centre, indeed, that end was accomplished. But what about our region? Should we go through the transition process with **no guarantees, no benefits** only to discover what we have not gained and will not receive?

The Breton Village Council and other concerned area residents have diligently worked too long to lose what has been achieved. We know the involvement with the County of Leduc and further, we know the benefits that will be derived from Genesee. We do not care to waste the time and energy to develop new agreements for programs and services that are presently established. Equally important, we do not want to risk the loss or deferment of our approved proposed projects.

Breton was not convinced that disrupting an existing, viable, sound system for another system was necessary. Notwithstanding our position, the study clearly indicated the existence of the proposed Drayton Valley county does not require the inclusion of the County of Leduc.

Therefore, the Village of Breton Council requests the entire portion of the west end of the County of Leduc No. 25 remain intact and not be included in the proposed Drayton Valley County.

A 2.3.3.-1

Statement by the Village of Breton
to the Yes Group meeting: February 24th, 1986

Welcome to the People - Good to see a tremendous turn-out.

History - What has happened to bring us all here? Perhaps the reason Council responded the way they did should be explained.

a. Council did not have the feasibility study in their hands until January 10th, 1986.

b. Council read the County of Leduc Board of Education response January 14th, 1986 and set a special meeting for January 16, 1986 to discuss Breton's response.

c. January 20, 1986 at a Public Meeting Shirley Cripps approved, firstly, the feasibility study be made public and secondly, the study was the final document. We were informed our meetings could commence and her preference was to settle the issue before a provincial election. She also stated she had recommended in a letter to the Minister the boundary should be Buck Lake Creek.

From this point, we believe everyone felt panic - something was passing us by without regard to our viewpointS, People were reacting to rumour that caused actions based on emotion. The situtation was becoming very emotional - simply because we all felt time was not on our sides. We do not want to discuss who did what first and therefore, this happened. Let it be sufficient to say, those working on the same issue felt a great urgency and were compelled to act and thereby set up camps.

The Village Council is more accessible to its electorate and would have been acting in an irresponsible manner if no statement had been issued. We saw concerns in the study that would affect Breton and perceived them to be overlooked. Therefore, our response was published in good faith and without prejudice.

We had no idea the effect this publication would have on the rural area. Thank-you for writing to the Minister.

Perhaps now, we can allow the study process to take its normal course of three years duration. There are new issues involved that were not present at the previous campaign, and the study indicated a final report was to be published for public use. Further, much more research had to be done in order to make a knowledgable decision. No one wanted something dumped on us.

Our Concerns are:

(1). We should know the results of the ID #14 Corporation study.

(2). What form of government will it be - M.D., traditional county, or unified County. Who is involved in the selection and will there be an opportunity for voting on the form of government prior to a new government being formed.

(3). An eduation governance and finance study should be undertaken - what alternatives are available as least disruption for everyone?

(4). What are the costs of establishing another government?

(5). We require a definite answer from the government on electric, power and pipeline assessment distribution. Will the resurfacing of this issue cause any detrimental effects to a new government based almost on solely industrial assessment.

(6). What if the forest industry should not proceed as anticipated?

(7). What will be the future of the oil industry? If fields are not opened and wells are not producing, assessment is lost and therefore, the tax dollars drop considerably.

(8). What would be the effects on the County of Leduc should the annexation to City of Leduc succeed and the Genesee Power Plant deferred as a result of decreased demand in a depressed Oil economy?

(9). How firm are hospital district boundaries? It is conceivable the Drayton Valley Hospital District could be increased to include portions of the Breton area and extended care or a nursing facility be established in Breton.

These are all normal concerns of a smaller group of people that would be dominated by a larger group. While each one of us has our biases and opinions to which we are entitled, we all must view the study in the attitude of fairness to all. We, therefore, strongly recommend the study follow the normal course of three years duration.

PHONE: 963-2231

YOUR FILE ______
OUR FILE ______

COUNTY OF PARKLAND NO. 31
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

STONY PLAIN, ALBERTA
T0E 2G0

86 01 16

Mr. Ian Wight
Policy and Research Section
Municipal Services Branch
Alberta Municipal Affairs
9925 - 107 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2H9

Dear Mr. Wight:

The school authorities of the County of Parkland are not prepared to comment on the Drayton Valley Area Municipal Feasibility Study at this time.

Rather the Board has forwarded requests to the Premier, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, and the Minister of Education to have a separate educational implications study undertaken by Alberta Education personnel prior to any decisions reached on this issue.

Yours truly,

M. W. Tkachuk

M. W. Tkachuk
Superintendent of Schools

MWT/ds

PHONE: 963-2231

A 3.1.2.-1

YOUR FILE ________
OUR FILE ________

COUNTY OF PARKLAND NO. 31
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

STONY PLAIN, ALBERTA
T0E 2G0

86 01 16

Hon. Julian G. J. Koziak
Minister of Municipal Affairs
224 Legislature Building
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2B6

Dear Sir:

The Board of Education of the County of Parkland recently received a document entitled; Drayton Valley Area Municipal Feasibility Study - Draft - Preliminary Main Report, November, 1985, which originated from the Policy and Research Section, Municipal Services Branch, Alberta Municipal Affairs.

Several statements in the report indicate that serious consideration is being given, by Provincial authorities, to the formation of a separate municipal and educational government on the west end of the County of Parkland. Our Board is concerned about the implications of any decision which may affect the ability of local schools to deliver an optimum quality educational program to children, both in the short and long term.

In response to the concern the Board passed the following resolution at its meeting of 86 01 14:

> "That the Board of Education urge the appropriate authorities in the Government of Alberta to have Alberta Education undertake a study of the educational implications of the possible formation of an independent Drayton Valley Area school jurisidiction prior to having any decision taken on the issue."

We respectfully solicit your support in initiating such a study.

Yours truly,

K. R. Fuhr
Chairman Board of Education

c.c. Hon. D. R. Getty, Premier of Alberta
Hon. David King, Minister of Education

A 3.2.-1

YOUR FILE ____________
OUR FILE ____________

MAYOR

PHONE: 542-5327

P.O. BOX 837, 5149-51 AVENUE,
DRAYTON VALLEY, ALBERTA TOE OMO

January 27, 1985

Honorable Julian Koziak, Minister
Municipal Affairs
Legislature Building
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2B6

Dear Hon. Koziak:

RE: Formation of the County of Drayton Valley

We have reviewed and discussed the report regarding the formation of a County of Drayton Valley, and find that the study clearly demonstrates the viability of forming a County of Drayton Valley. We wish to offer our support for the formation of this County to be initiated in the very near future.

As you may be aware, millions of dollars are directed out of the Drayton Valley area and are used to enhance the eastern urban areas of the County of Parkland and the County of Leduc. Little, if any, revenue sharing is received by the Town of Drayton Valley from surrounding government (i.e. County of Parkland, County of Leduc, I.D. #14, County of Wetaskiwing), and if this trend is allowed to continue, the Drayton Valley area will find itself in serious financial jeopardy when the oil and gas industries are depleted.

At present, the Drayton Valley area is considered to be only a trading area, and a local county government would recognize Drayton Valley as an official trading centre. The creation of a County of Drayton Valley will serve to increase the economic stability of this area by creating additional direct and indirect employment opportunities, and will enhance the establishment of additional government services in this area.

The formation of this County of Drayton Valley is also in keeping with your department's philosophy of promoting local democracy and we fully support your department's initiative in proceeding with the establishment of a County of Drayton Valley.

2...

It is time that a decision on this county formation is made by the Provincial Government without the necessity of further studies - this matter has been studied to death over the last fifteen years. The feasibility of this county is outlined very clearly in the report and we therefore request and look forward to hearing your decision to form a new county.

We are available for any further support or assistance you may need.

Yours truly,

TOWN OF DRAYTON VALLEY

W. R. Mayhew
Mayor

rjw

A 3.3.-1

VILLAGE OF ENTWISTLE

☆

ENTWISTLE - ALBERTA
TELEPHONE 727-3652

February 25, 1986

Ian Wight
Municipal Affairs
Policy and Research
9925 - 107 St.
Edmonton, Alta.
T5K 2H9

Re: Drayton Valley Area Municipal Feasibility Study

Dear Mr. Wight;

After perusing the feasibility study the Village of Entwistle Council state that they can't see any advantages of being in any other county than the one that we are in already.

Thank you.

Yours truly,

Elsie Pat

Mrs. Elsie Patterson
Secretary Treasurer
Village of Entwistle

P.S. Our mayor now is Lyle Van Loosen.

A 4.1.-1

County of Wetaskiwin No. 10

109 - 51 Street
Vetaskiwin, Alberta T9A 2A5
elephone: 352-3321

March 4, 1986

Your Ref:
Our Ref:

Honorable Julian Koziak,
Minister of Municipal Affairs,
224 Legislature Building,
EDMONTON, Alberta, T5K 2B7

Dear Sir:

Re: Drayton Valley Area Municipal Feasibility Study: Preliminary Main Report (DRAFT)

The Council of the County of Wetaskiwin No. 10 has been most concerned about the proposed formation of a new municipality or County which could be located around the town of Drayton Valley.

Council's interest is of course centered on our own County which has been included in the several reports whereby part of our western area has been mentioned for possible inclusion in the proposed new municipality.

Council has been unanimous in its stand regarding the inclusion of part of the west area into the new municipality and that is, that the County should remain as is with no changes made unless the majority of our residents in the area are of the opposite opinion and that has not been evident at any time since this study began. In fact in the initial study made approximately 10 years ago our people in the west end made it clear at those hearings that they were simply asking for a feasibility study and had never asked to become part of a new County.

Therefore, the Council of the County of Wetaskiwin is unanimous in its agreement that no part of the County be included in the proposed new municipality and would make these comments on its own behalf.

(a) To take away part of our County would seriously lower our assessment thereby reducing our ability to provide services to the level that our ratepayers presently enjoy.
(This is confirmed in one of the reports prepared by Mr. Wight).

(b) The County Council has over the years been very much aware of the needs of the west area of the County and has and is making decisions to make its services more evident and available. Some examples: i) Steel sheds located at Alder Flats and Winfield to house supplies for quicker pick up ii) Men and vehicles located in Alder Flats and Winfield areas to look after repair and maintenance jobs particularly on the roads iii) County office personnel set up a day each year in the west for collection of taxes eliminating the need to travel to Wetaskiwin iv) the Agricultural Fieldman and the Rimbey D.A. go to Buck Lake two days a month to help the farmers in the area with their agricultural problems.

(c) The County has had for years an Advisory Board made up of residents from across the County, which Board meets with the County Agricultural Committee two or more times a year to provide input into the agricultural programs devised and approved by the Committee. This Advisory Board brings to the Committee its knowledge of the various areas of the County and thereby provides valuable input into the continuance of old programs and the development of new programs.

(d) To continue on the services provided across the County the following comments are submitted for your information: (i) The County has divided its boundary into 4 recreation zones, each zone having its own committee. These committees are made up from residents from each community and they are responsible for the distribution of funds to the community organizations in the area who have submitted applications for certain funds. The Committee reviews the applications, makes decisions and forwards these recommendations to the County Recreation Board (made up of people living in the various areas - committee members) for final review and approval, (ii) Ambulance service is provided in the west area of the County by Tri County Emergency Medical Services who have an ambulance stationed in Breton. Hospital services are provided by Breton Hospital and the Wetaskiwin General Hospital. The Peace Hills Foundation operates two Senior Citizens Homes, one in Wetaskiwin, one in the Hamlet of Winfield, (iii) Fire protection is now provided across the County, with the latest area in the extreme west being serviced from Buck Lake. The County provides grants to assist these Fire Departments with capital purchases beyond the grant payable, normally being levied (after purchase) from the ratepayers living within the boundaries of the defined fire protection area.

(e) If the west end of our County was to be included in a new municipality or county, the centre of which would be Drayton Valley, our west end citizens would find themselves on the far end of that new jurisdiction with no guarantee that taxes would be less and services greater.

(f) Council is presently discussing some more changes geared to continue with its policy to ensure that its residents in the west area are not forgotten and new ways are being studied to improve on this service. The present suggestions which it is hoped will be favorably accepted by Council include, sending out a crawler tractor permanently to the west area, and placing a permanent road maintenance foreman in the west area (e.g. a maintenance man for the schools and teacherages has been living in the west for a number of years already), sending out a mechanic at least once a week to increase efficiency by quick repair eliminating the time and cost of transportation to and from Wetaskiwin.

Three questions need to be asked:

i) If the price of oil continues on its downward trend, will this proposed municipality or county be able to support itself, maintain its services to its residents, retain 25% of current tax levy as surplus as required by Alberta Municipal Affairs, and still maintain a tax levy which would approximate the tax levies of neighbouring municipalities?

ii) Conversely, will the municipalities from which the land is taken be equally affected?

iii) On the presumption that this new municipality or county would be an urban/rural mix whereby the Town of Drayton Valley would be part of the total thereby providing its assessment for tax levy purposes, then, if the Town Council took steps in the future to opt out of the municipality created and assume its own identity, and given the facts, a) the assessment base would be reduced by the amount of the Town Assessment, b) the possibility of oil prices continuing its downward trend, c) the knowledge that the Town would be approaching the municipality for funding re: services used by both residents e.g. fire protection, recreation, landfill site, cemetery, library etc., etc. would the municipality, that part which remains, be able to support itself, maintain its services to its residents, retain 25% of current tax levy as surplus as required by Alberta Municipal Affairs, and still maintain a tax levy which would approximate the tax levies of neighbouring municipalities?

Respectfully Submitted,

Tom G Thurber

Tom G. Thurber,
Reeve,
County of Wetaskiwin No. 10.

JM:sa

cc: Ian Wight, Manager
Policy and Research,
Alberta Municipal Affairs

Alberta
HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL CARE

P.O. Box 2222, 11010 - 101 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5J 2P4 403/ 427-6096

January 14, 1986

File No. D007 RE
Your File No. Mun-201

Mr. Ian Wight, Manager
Policy and Research
Municipal Services Branch
Department of Municipal Affairs
Jarvis Building
Mail Station 11A
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2H9

Dear Sir:

Re: Drayton Valley Area Municipal Feasibility Study
Draft Report

The Legislative Research and Planning Branch of the Department of Hospitals and Medical Care has reviewed the above noted report in response to a request from our Deputy Minister arising out of a memorandum dated December 10, 1985, from Archie R. Grover, Deputy Minister, Municipal Affairs and we offer the following comments.

None of the various options proposed in the report would in our view justify amendments to the various hospital district boundaries. The only major possible negative affect that the incorporation of the Drayton Valley area into a new rural municipality might have on the hospital districts in the area might be in the sharing of the E.P. & P.L. tax via the "Ramsay Formula". This would have to be worked out in some detail and presumably would be the subject of considerable study. If however the E.P. & P.L. tax is collected provincially and then shared with the various jurisdictions, this concern may be eliminated.

We trust that these comments may be of some assistance to you however should you have any further questions or comments regarding this matter please feel free to contact the writer at your convenience.

Yours truly,

Bruce W. Jones
Director
Legislative Research & Planning

cc: Alex McPherson, M.D., Ph.D.
George R. Beck, C.A.

A 5.2.1.-1

EDMONTON METROPOLITAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Suite 600, Baker Centre, 10025 - 106 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5J 1G4
Phone (403) 423-5701

Ross G. Quinn
CHAIRMAN

R.G. Madziya, M.A., M.C.I.P.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

YOUR FILE ....
OUR FILE 5004-1

January 13, 1986

Mr. Ian Wight, Manager,
Alberta Municipal Affairs,
Policy and Research,
Municipal Services Branch,
Jarvis Building,
9925 - 107 Street,
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2H9

Dear Mr. Wight:

Re: Drayton Valley Area Municipal Feasibility Study: Preliminary Main Report

Staff of the Edmonton Metropolitan Regional Planning Commission have reviewed with interest the above report, and commend you on the thoroughness of your analysis.

The discussion pertaining to regional planning commissions suggests that the balance of the County of Parkland might be placed wholly within the jurisdiction of the E.M.R.P.C. Staff are in support of this position, but would further suggest that similar consideration may be given to rationalizing the E.M.R.P.C. boundary with respect to the County of Leduc, which is in the awkward position of being located within two regional planning commissions. Having planning commission boundaries that are coterminous with municipal boundaries is advantageous for a number of reasons, including ease of data collection from Statistics Canada sources, consistency in the application of regional planning policies at the municipal level, and recognition of the metropolitan area's sphere of influence.

The above comments are those of E.M.R.P.C. staff, and may not reflect the views of the Commission. As this study is finalized, and definite proposals are under consideration, I anticipate that the Commission will be interested in reviewing it formally and providing comments.

Yours truly,

RGMadziya

R. G. Madziya, M.C.I.P.
Executive Director

RGM:ME:ig

A 5.2.2.-1

Yellowhead Regional Planning Commission

January 31, 1986

Alberta Municipal Affairs
Policy and Research
Municipal Services Branch
9925 - 107 Street,
EDMONTON, Alberta
T5K 2H9

Attention: Mr. Ian Wight

Dear Mr. Wight:

Re: Drayton Valley Area Municipal
Feasibility Study: Preliminary Main Report (Draft)

I refer to your request of December 5th, 1985 for comments on the above. (Please forgive my tardiness in replying!).

The comments following are those of this staff and myself and not of the Commission.

1. The report appears to be well documented and prepared and its findings seem to be based on sound rationale.
2. We are not academically qualified to comment on the municipal/financial analysis and conclusions.
3. The implications to the Yellowhead Regional Planning Commission of a new local rural municipality are as follows;

   a) If a new rural municipality is formed it should be a member in one Regional Planning Commission's area - not divided between several Commissions.

   b) If the new rural municipality is in the Yellowhead Regional Planning Commission's area, is not its' own Subdivision Approval Authority and does not have its own Planning Department, we would have to consider our own budgetary (staff) requirements. In all likelihood a new General Municipal Plan and accompanying Land Use Bylaw would be requested initially by the new council.

......2

P.O. Box 249, Onoway, Alberta, TOE 1VO, Telephone (403) 967-2949, 967-2204

We would also be required to process all subdivision applications in the new municipality.

The above and probably many other planning demands would place additional burdens on our current work program and staff which would have to be considered by the Commission and the Alberta Planning Board.

I should add, that given our existing Commission boundary, it would make sense to include the new rural municipality within the Yellowhead Region - an addition which we as staff would support.

c) If the new rural municipality were in the Yellowhead Region, planning studies which are carried out on a regional or subregional basis would be simplified in terms of study preparation, data collection and analysis, etc. because of the co-terminous boundaries.

It is not my intention to present your report to the full membership of the Commission in a public forum at this moment in time because of the nature of the study.

As and when your findings have been completed and ready for public/political debate, would seem to be a more appropriate time for open Commission debate and consideration.

Feel free to use any of the above observations in your final report with the understanding that they are those of this Commission's staff and not the Commission.

Best of luck in this project!!

Regards;

Grahame Allen.

Grahame Allen
Executive Director

GA/lj

A 5.3.-1

P.O. BOX 1718
EDSON, ALBERTA
T0E 0P0

ALBERTA WEST CENTRAL HEALTH UNIT

January 16, 1986

Mr. Ian Wight, Manager,
Alberta Municipal Affairs,
Policy and Research,
Municipal Services Branch,
Jarvis Building,
9925 - 107 Street,
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2H9

Dear Mr. Wight:

RE: Draft Preliminary Main Report:
Drayton Valley Municipal Feasibility Study

Thank you for the opportunity to review this draft report. I have enclosed a copy of a map which delineates the Health Unit boundaries which may or may not be affected by establishing a new option in the Drayton Valley area.

The Alberta West Central Health Unit is an autonomous body in receipt of a Provincial allocation each year. We have a district office in Drayton Valley which provides service to the town and rural area in our south-east section. We also have an office in Evansburg servicing the eastern section. Expansion to offer service from these offices would pose no problem for us should it be required, indeed for some programs this would merely legitimize service already being delivered through these offices.

The Health Unit Board presently has representatives from 7 wards:

Mr. Wayne Sawyer	V Hinton
Mr. Jeff Emons	II ID 14 West
Mr. Arnold Jorgensen	II ID 14 East
Mr. Tom McGee	III Drayton Valley
Mrs. Dolly Patterson	VI Grande Cache
Mr. Henry Rondeau	I County Parkland
Mr. Keith Williams	IV Edson

and I agree with your statement on p.7-39 it would make sense, if one of

DRAYTON VALLEY EDSON EVANSBURG GRANDE CACHE HINTON

the local government options proved viable, to replace the representative from County of Parkland with one from the new option. Otherwise the new option would represent part of a ward or a whole ward in each of five different Health Units and thus might be required to appoint a representative to each of five Boards.

I trust that these comments are of some value. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Yours sincerely,

Nicholas J. Bayliss, MB., BS., M.P.H.,
Medical Officer of Health.

NJB/mr
Encl.

A 6.1.1.-1

Box 1636
Drayton Valley, Alberta
TOE OMO
February 6, 1986

The Hon. Julian G. Koziak
Minister for Municipal Affairs
224 Legislature Building
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2B7

Dear Mr. Koziak:

I am pleased to inform you that the executive of the Yes Group Western Ratepayers has had an opportunity to study the Drayton Valley Area Municipal Feasability Study.

It is with pleasure that we note the study recognizes that a separate local government for the general Drayton Valley area is highly feasible at the present time, almost regardless of what areas might be combined to constitute the new unit.

May I take this opportunity to inform you that our executive favours the area configurations listed as Map 5-4 as our first preference and Map 5-3 as our second. We realize that there will probably be some adjustments to these areas when a formal indication of the peoples preference is determined. We expect our membership to top the 1000 mark by the time we have a general membership meeting early in March 1986. Our membership is spread throughout the populated areas of the proposed jurisdiction.

The reasons to support the formation of a new form of government for this area remain unchanged and are probably more pronounced now than ever before. Vast sums of money, in the form of pipeline and powerline assessment, continue to be removed and spent to a large extent in the more heavily populated urban centers. The people in the area are very often divided over issues that draw them apart because of decisions made by four different municipal bureaucracies and 3 different school jurisdictions. We find inequalities in taxation between farmers that are taxed in the counties of Parkland and Leduc, compared to those in I.D. 14. I.D. 14 takes approximately twenty five to twenty eight percent of their income from the proposed area and puts back virtually nothing. A similar imbalance occurs in both the counties of Parkland and Leduc. The report makes mention that if a new form of government is created it would be wise to set up a mini heritage trust fund with the excess funds that would be generated. This would help insure the areas future when the revenues run out 25 to 30 years down the road.
Please bear in mind that no thought has been given to this situation by the present municipal jurisdiction. Their concern has been to support the more heavily populated urban jurisdiction far distant from the Drayton Valley area.

In the case of Parkland and Leduc we find the councillors we elect in a very difficult situation when they have problems to relate to their fellow councillors in the east because our economies are so different. This problem is further enhanced by the imbalance of representation. Parkland has made a motion to add an additional two councillors to represent the eastern area of the County. When this occurs the councillors from this end might as well stay home.

It was recently pointed out to me that the indebtedness by way of debentures for the County of Parkland school systems building program shows that ninety six percent of indebtedness occurs in the east end of the county and four percent in the Drayton Valley area. I am not sure but I would venture a guess that a similar situation exists in the County of Leduc.

In 1973 the committee (under the chairmanship of J. C. Leslie) recommended in favour of the creation of a new county in this area. This decision was reversed in 1976. In 1977 municipal affairs conducted a study which indicated that the creation of a new form of government for this area would have an adverse financial impact on the County of Parkland, Leduc County, I.D. 14, and the urban municipalities supporting the Yellowhead School Division. Please keep in mind that these jurisdictions have enjoyed the benefit of the enhanced revenue from the proposed area during all the time that has elapsed, for the most part, at the expense of the ratepayers in the new proposed area.

Times have changed and the recent Drayton Valley Area Municipal Feasability Study indicates that there would be minimal, if any, financial impact on the County of Parkland, Leduc County or I.D. 14.

At the present time there appears to be a sense of urgency in the area because all indications are favourable to the formation of this new jurisdiction. In spite of this, some administrations have set about to protect their interest and we find that the traditional red herrings are being drawn out of the basket. Such is the case in and around the Breton area where the people have been told that if they become part of the new area they would lose their schools and their children would have to be bused to Drayton Valley. There is also some hint that the Leduc County school system was planning to spend three million dollars upgrading the schools and this would be lost. There is nothing to indicate that common sense prevails in this kind of situation. It just makes the people more frightened and less unsure of the proposed new area.

The study would indicate the creation of a new jurisdiction is, without a doubt, feasible and I think that the above would indicate that it is most certainly warranted. We feel time is very important in this issue and hope that something concrete could be done during the spring sitting of the legislature. This would insure time for the necessary ground work to be completed before the Municipal elections in the fall of 1986.

Could you please indicate to us what events are to follow this report and when we might expect to see this new form of government become a reality? I can only praise you and your department officials for the effort and cooperation you have shown us to date. I look forward to your early reply and direction on this matter.

Yours truly,

R. B. Booth
Chairman
Yes Group Western Ratepayers

RB/acs
cc:Hon. Don Getty
Hon. Dr. Ian Reid
Hon. Peter Trenchy
Shirley Cripps, MLA
Bill Purdy, MLA

A 6.1.2.-1

February 1, 1986

This Is A Copy Of Letter
Sent To The
Breton Village Council And
To The Breton & District Chamber Of Commerence

This letter is to advise you, that we the members of the "Breton District Yes Group" have organized and are keenly interested in working with you to promote and eventually establish the new county centered in the Drayton Valley area.

We invite the Village Council and the Chamber of Commerence to work with us to attain this goal of self-government and in so doing:

1. Preserve and enhance the Breton High School and maintain the Breton High School attendance area as is, regardless of municipal boundaries.
2. Preserve and enhance the Breton hospital and the hospital district as it is presently established.
3. Maintain the economic and social fabric of Breton and surrounding district and to assist wherever and whenever possible to enhance the recreational facilities within this community.

Sincerely:

Breton District Yes Group

A 6.2.-1

Breton & District Chamber of Commerce
Box 243
Breton, Alberta
T0C 0P0

Mr. Ian Wight, Manager
Alberta Municipal Affairs
Policy and Research
Municipal Services Branch
Jarvis Building
9925 - 107 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2H9

Dear Mr. Wight,

The members of the Breton and District Chamber of Commerce have individually and collectively studied the Drayton Valley Feasibility Study. The Chamber believes the only response we can make is to support the Village of Breton position. We strongly believe that as proposed by the study, we stand to see a reduction in attendance at the Breton Schools. This alone gives rise for concerns to those who have labored so long and so hard to bring the schools to their present state which we consider to be excellent. The Chamber believes that any proposed boundary should be absolutely no farther east than Buck Lake Creek.

Why should we stand by and see the decline, both in financial and human resources? Has it ever been expedient to Rob Peter to pay Paul? We cannot agree that your proposals would benefit our community.

Sincerely,
Anna Close
Anna Close, Secretary